

Climbing Higher



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Climbing Higher

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Jam for Jim



Clem Roberts was a good shot with a stone, a ball, a green apple, or anything else that he could throw. Every boy who had ever thrown a snowball at Clem found out quickly how good a shot Clem was.

It isn't surprising that Clem was a sure shot. He should have been. His brother Jim began teaching him to throw almost as soon as Clem could stand up.

When Clem was older, he started the habit of carrying little stones in his pocket. He liked to have some handy when he saw a can on top of a post or found some other good mark to throw at.



One morning Clem was walking through the woods near his home. At the edge of a small clearing he stopped. A wide grin spread over his face. Very quietly he put his hand into his pocket and pulled out a stone. Here was too good a chance to miss.

In the middle of the clearing a big shiny pail sat on a tree stump. A little way from the stump Sally Horn was picking raspberries and dropping them into a small pail.

Sally was so busy and Clem was so quiet that she hadn't noticed him at all.

Still grinning, Clem took careful aim. Out toward the stump flew the stone. Clang! It dropped straight into the big pail, making a frightful noise.



“Oh!” squealed Sally, popping up like a jack-in-the-box and dropping her pail of raspberries.

Clem stepped back quickly to hide behind a tree, but he couldn't keep from laughing out loud at the way Sally jumped.

“You think you're smart!” Sally scolded, when she heard Clem's laugh. “What if you'd hit me instead of the pail?”

“I'm not that poor a shot. I've had plenty of practice,” Clem answered, as he came toward Sally. “I didn't aim at you. I aimed at the pail on the stump.”

“Just the same you scared me,” said Sally.

Clem just laughed at that. He knew that Sally wasn't really scared. She squealed sometimes when she was suddenly surprised by a big noise, but she didn't squeal as much as some girls. She didn't squeal if a bug ran across her hand or a strange cow looked at her.

Sally could fish as well as any boy, and she dared to go anywhere in the woods.

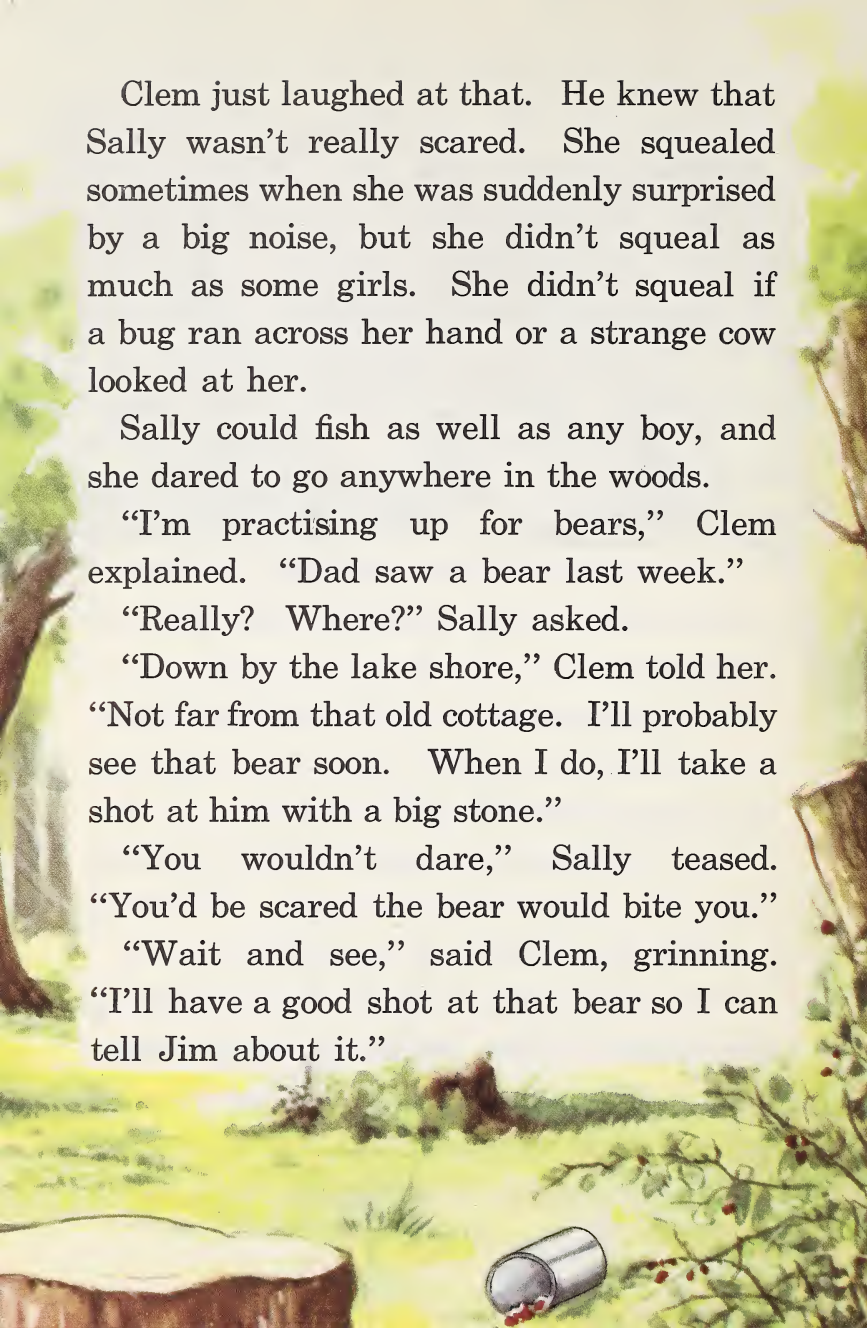
"I'm practising up for bears," Clem explained. "Dad saw a bear last week."

"Really? Where?" Sally asked.

"Down by the lake shore," Clem told her. "Not far from that old cottage. I'll probably see that bear soon. When I do, I'll take a shot at him with a big stone."

"You wouldn't dare," Sally teased. "You'd be scared the bear would bite you."

"Wait and see," said Clem, grinning. "I'll have a good shot at that bear so I can tell Jim about it."



Suddenly the grin left Clem's face. He remembered what Jim had said in his letter. In that letter Jim said the first thing he wanted when he got out of the army was pancakes with some of Mrs. Horn's prize jam on them. That was why Sally was out here looking for raspberries.

He remembered, too, that Jim was getting out of the army and would be home on Friday of that very week.

Clem picked up the small pail. There were hardly enough raspberries in it to cover the bottom. He looked at the bushes.

"Not very good picking here," he said. "There are hardly any berries on these bushes."

"We're not going to find many," said Sally. "This is the third patch I've tried."

"Why not go down to the old cottage and look around?" Clem asked. "I saw a patch of raspberry bushes there. We've got to find some raspberries, Sally."

"I've been all around the old cottage," Sally said. "The raspberries are gone."

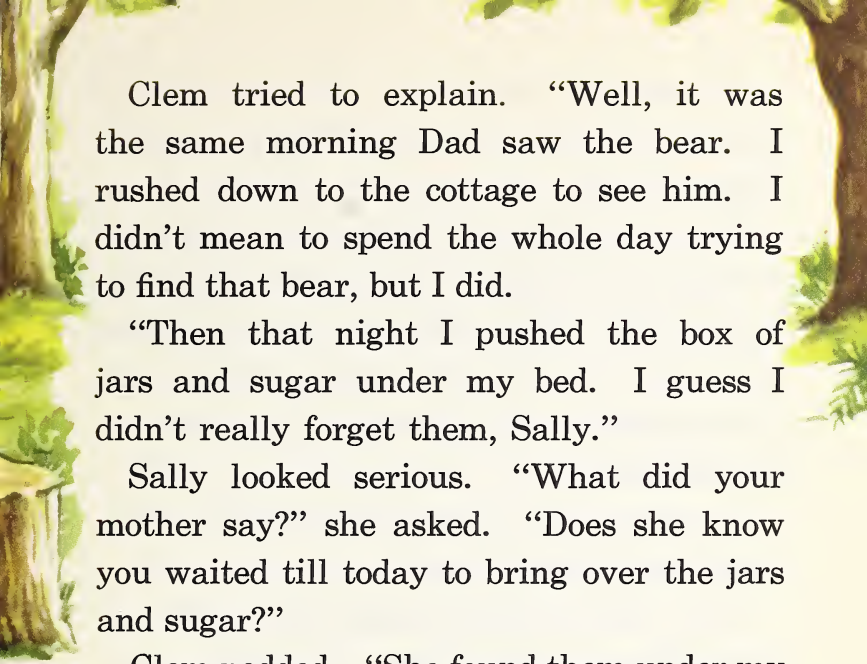


"It's too late," Sally went on. "Why didn't your mother send the jars and the sugar sooner if she wanted my mother to make some jam for her? The berries should have been picked two weeks ago. The bushes are empty now."

"Well, Sally — you see — Mother isn't to blame," said Clem. "She gave me the jars and sugar to bring to your mother more than two weeks ago."

"That same day she called your mother to tell her that Jim wants some of her jam as soon as he gets out of the army. I'm to blame. I forgot — that's all."

"Why, Clem Roberts! How did you happen to do that?" asked Sally.



Clem tried to explain. "Well, it was the same morning Dad saw the bear. I rushed down to the cottage to see him. I didn't mean to spend the whole day trying to find that bear, but I did."

"Then that night I pushed the box of jars and sugar under my bed. I guess I didn't really forget them, Sally."

Sally looked serious. "What did your mother say?" she asked. "Does she know you waited till today to bring over the jars and sugar?"

Clem nodded. "She found them under my bed this morning," he said. "She was angry. She showed me Jim's letter saying he wants some of your mother's jam on pancakes first thing when he gets out of the army. He'll be home on Friday."

"On Friday? Oh, fine!" she cried. Then she looked serious again. "We'll just have to find some berries, won't we?"

Clem nodded again. "We don't dare go home without some berries," he said. "I can't let Jim down."

"Come on!" said Sally. She handed the big pail to Clem and started down a narrow loggers' road.

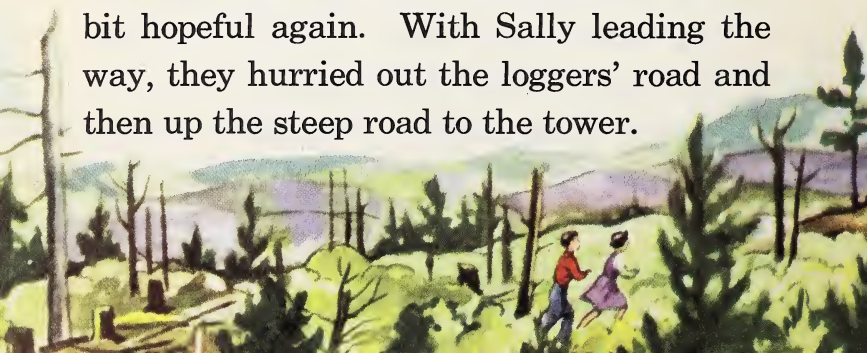
For an hour or more they wandered through the woods. They stepped into holes, tripped over sticks, and ran against stumps that were covered by bushes. They were all scratched up, but they found only a few berries.

"I guess it's no use," said Clem. "We might as well give up."

They were going through the bushes at the edge of a fire road. Suddenly Sally stopped and pointed toward the lookout tower.

"The forest ranger!" she cried. "Tom Muir will know where there are berries if anybody does."

"That's right!" exclaimed Clem, feeling a bit hopeful again. With Sally leading the way, they hurried out the loggers' road and then up the steep road to the tower.

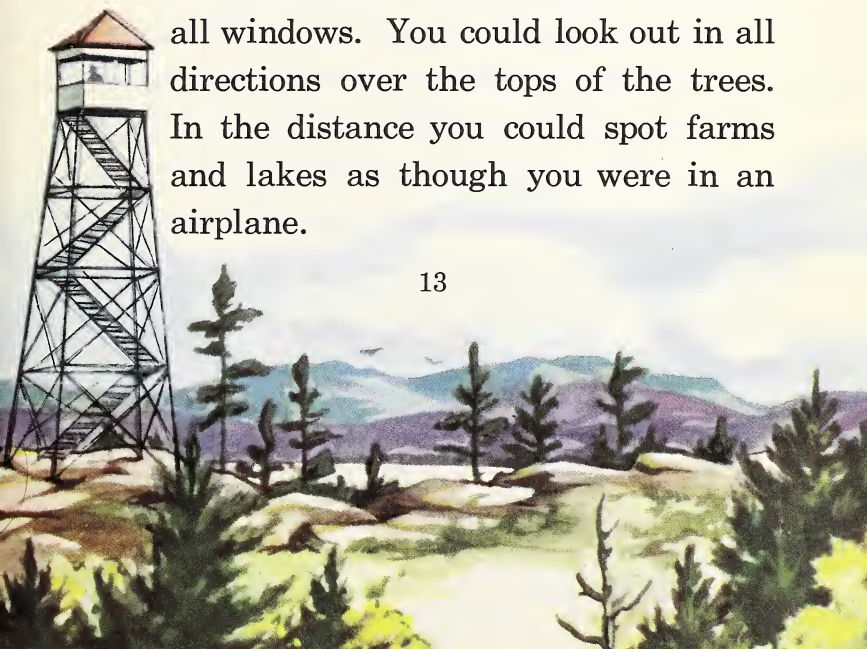


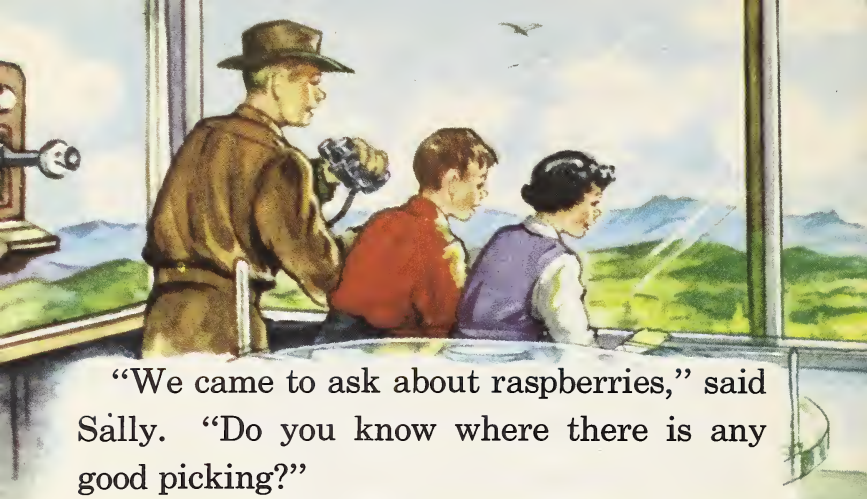
Sally started to run up the long, winding stairway that led to the top of the tower. Clem followed, running too, but was glad when she slowed down. It got scary above the tops of the trees. They didn't dare to look down till they got to the platform at the top of the tower.

"Hello, Sally," called the forest ranger. "Who's that you've got with you? Why, if it isn't Sure Shot Roberts!"

Clem grinned. He liked the name that Tom Muir had given him.

The walls of the tower were almost all windows. You could look out in all directions over the tops of the trees. In the distance you could spot farms and lakes as though you were in an airplane.





“We came to ask about raspberries,” said Sally. “Do you know where there is any good picking?”

The forest ranger shook his head. “The raspberries are all gone,” he said. “It’s too late for any berries except blackberries. What about them?”

“Blackberries!” cried Clem. “Where?” He knew that Jim liked blackberry jam even better than raspberry jam.

Tom Muir pointed to a spot in the distance.

“That little spot is Lost Lake,” he said. “I saw a good blackberry patch there a few days ago. It was small, but the bushes were loaded. It’s quite a long distance from here, though, and it’s in wild country. You might meet a lion! Would you dare to go there, Sure Shot?”

"A lion?" asked Clem as he saw the ranger grin. "Sure! How do we get there?"

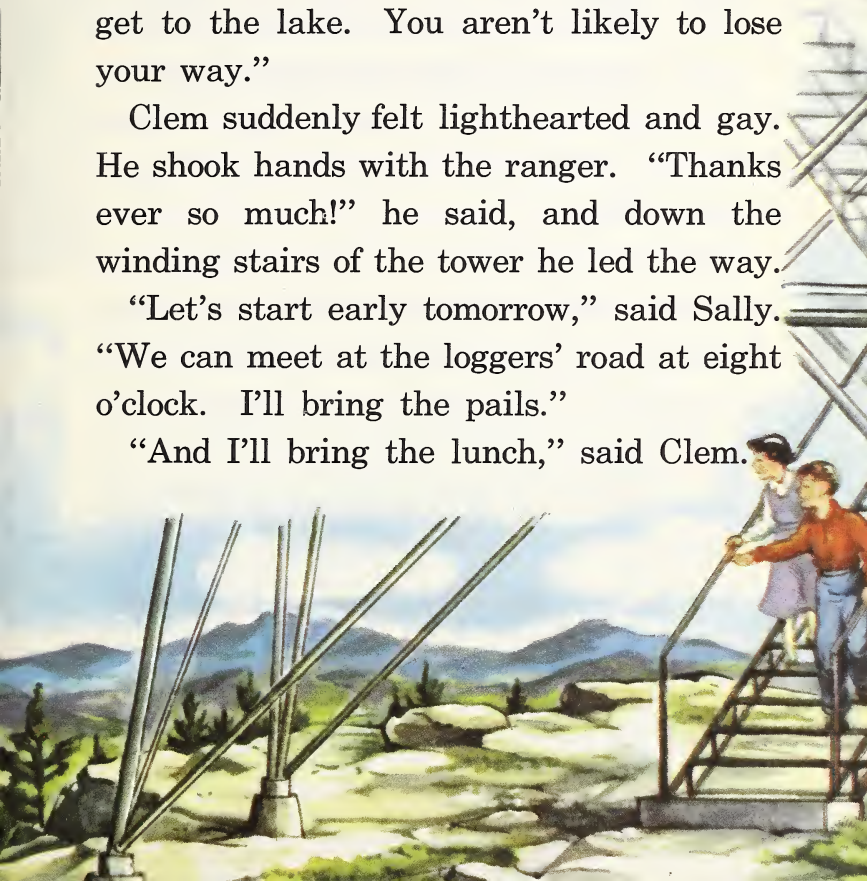
"I know the way," Sally answered. "I was there once with Daddy. A narrow path runs from the loggers' road to the lake."

The forest ranger nodded. "The path is well worn," he said. "The blackberry bushes are right along the path just before you get to the lake. You aren't likely to lose your way."

Clem suddenly felt lighthearted and gay. He shook hands with the ranger. "Thanks ever so much!" he said, and down the winding stairs of the tower he led the way.

"Let's start early tomorrow," said Sally. "We can meet at the loggers' road at eight o'clock. I'll bring the pails."

"And I'll bring the lunch," said Clem.





Next morning right on the dot of eight o'clock, Clem and Sally met at the spot they had agreed on. Sally had a large pail and two small ones. Her arms were wrapped in white rags.

"Mother wrapped my arms to keep the blackberry bushes from scratching me," she explained. "This is to wrap up your arms," she added, as she held out a piece of an old sheet.

"I don't need that," said Clem. "I'm not scared of a few scratches. But thank you.

"Look, Sally!" He held up a lunch box. "Eight sandwiches and four oranges! How's that for supplies for two?"

"Plenty!" Sally answered. "Come on."

The distance to Lost Lake was a little longer than they expected. At times they walked through thick forest. At other times they were in spots where the timber had been cut down. The loggers' road led them over hills and around marshes, but never where they met any trouble.

At last they came to the top of a hill where a path led off to the right. Sally turned into the path and Clem followed.

Soon they came to a place where a fire had burned the trees. The blackened trunks were still standing. A short distance ahead was a lake.

"We're here!" exclaimed Sally, running ahead. "Clem, see! Berries! Loads of them on these bushes!"



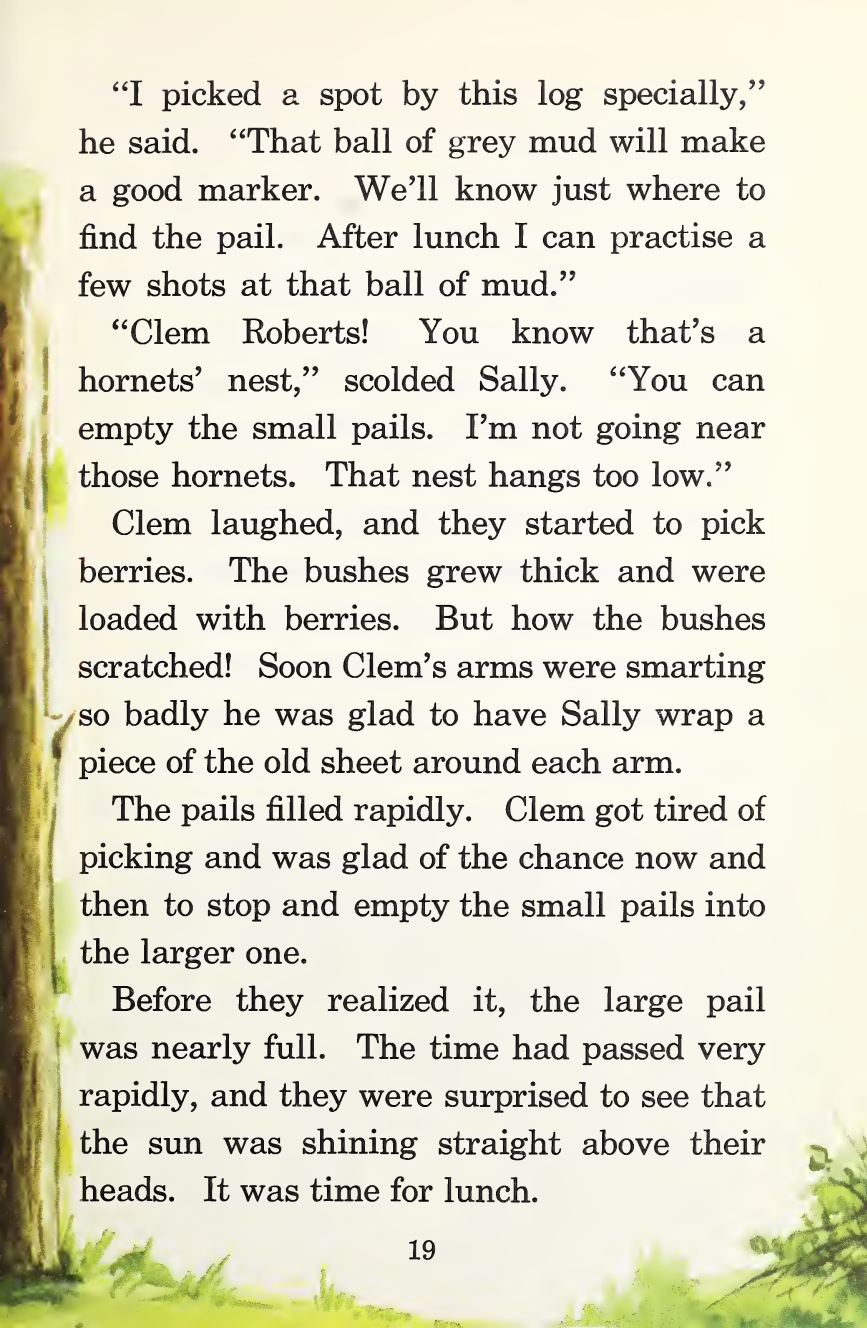
On one side of the path, bushes loaded with ripe blackberries grew among blackened tree trunks. On the other side of the path, there had been no fire. The timber grew thick there.

Clem set the large pail at the end of a log that lay under a tree on the wooded side of the path.

"Don't leave it there!" cried Sally, pointing up. A hornets' nest hung from a low branch of the tree.

Clem started to pick up the pail. Then he stopped, and a slow grin spread over his face. It wasn't often he had a chance to tease Sally.





“I picked a spot by this log specially,” he said. “That ball of grey mud will make a good marker. We’ll know just where to find the pail. After lunch I can practise a few shots at that ball of mud.”

“Clem Roberts! You know that’s a hornets’ nest,” scolded Sally. “You can empty the small pails. I’m not going near those hornets. That nest hangs too low.”

Clem laughed, and they started to pick berries. The bushes grew thick and were loaded with berries. But how the bushes scratched! Soon Clem’s arms were smarting so badly he was glad to have Sally wrap a piece of the old sheet around each arm.

The pails filled rapidly. Clem got tired of picking and was glad of the chance now and then to stop and empty the small pails into the larger one.

Before they realized it, the large pail was nearly full. The time had passed very rapidly, and they were surprised to see that the sun was shining straight above their heads. It was time for lunch.

Sally found a log at some distance from the hornets' nest.

"We'll sit here to eat our lunch," she said. "I won't eat near those hornets."

As they went to the log, Clem looked for more berries, but there weren't any.

"I guess we've about finished this place. Anyway, we've got a good supply for the jam," said Clem.

"Won't Jim be pleased!" exclaimed Sally. "Unless somebody eats the jam before Jim gets here Friday." Sally was teasing now.

"No chance for that to happen," said Clem. "This blackberry jam is to be for Jim!"

Clem passed Sally a sandwich. He was feeling good now because he was sure that Jim would have his jam on pancakes. He was sure his mother would forgive him, too.

After lunch Sally and Clem were sitting quietly, watching an army of bugs eating a piece of jelly sandwich that Sally had dropped. Suddenly there was a sound of snapping branches beyond the hornets' nest.

"Oh!" gasped Sally. "What's that?"

Clem got up to look around. "Nothing to be scared of, I'm sure," he said lightly.

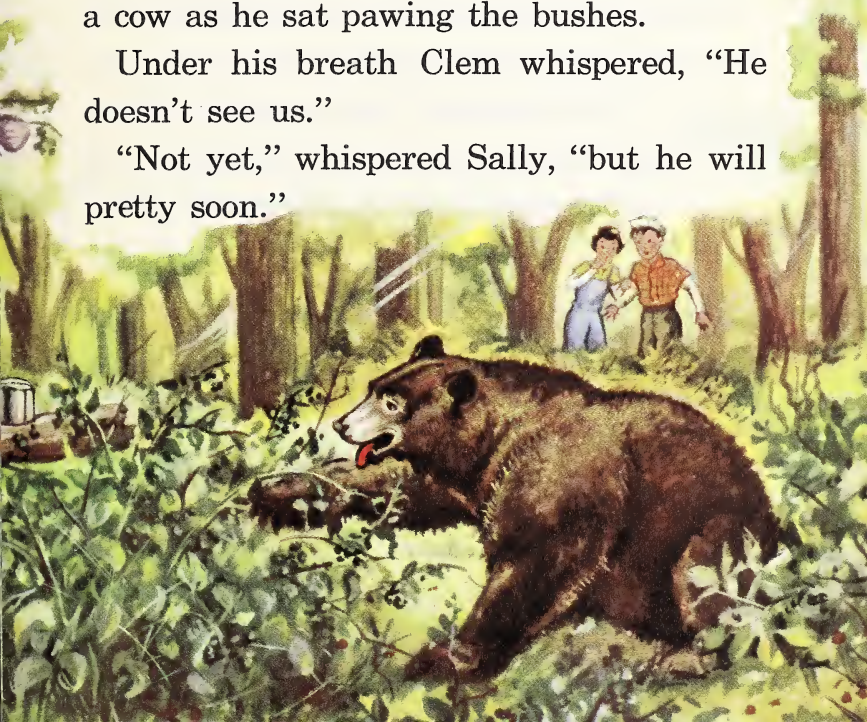
Suddenly he drew in his breath, and his face turned white. "Look over there where we were picking berries," he whispered. "It's a bear."

Sally moved closer to Clem. He could feel her hand shaking as she took hold of his arm. She was really scared.

Clem was scared too. He hardly dared to take a breath. The bear looked as big as a cow as he sat pawing the bushes.

Under his breath Clem whispered, "He doesn't see us."

"Not yet," whispered Sally, "but he will pretty soon."



Clem wanted to take hold of her hand and run, but his legs were shaking so hard he couldn't move. He just stood there watching the bear paw the bushes looking for berries.

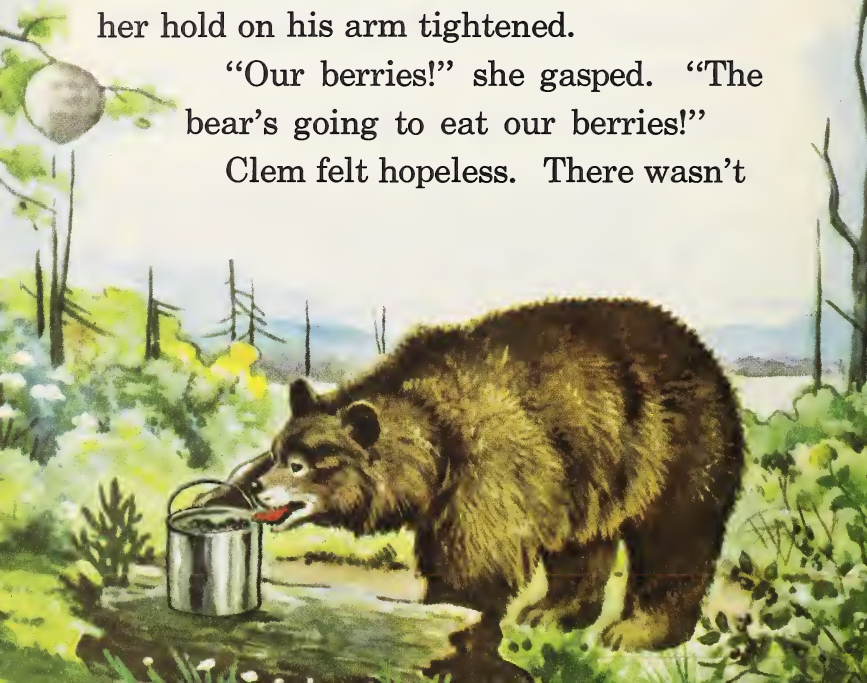
Suddenly the bear settled down on all four feet and raised his nose in the air. Then he headed straight for the big log where the large pail of berries stood.

Badly frightened, Clem and Sally watched while the bear put his front paws on the log and leaned over the pail.

Clem felt Sally's hand shaking again as her hold on his arm tightened.

"Our berries!" she gasped. "The bear's going to eat our berries!"

Clem felt hopeless. There wasn't



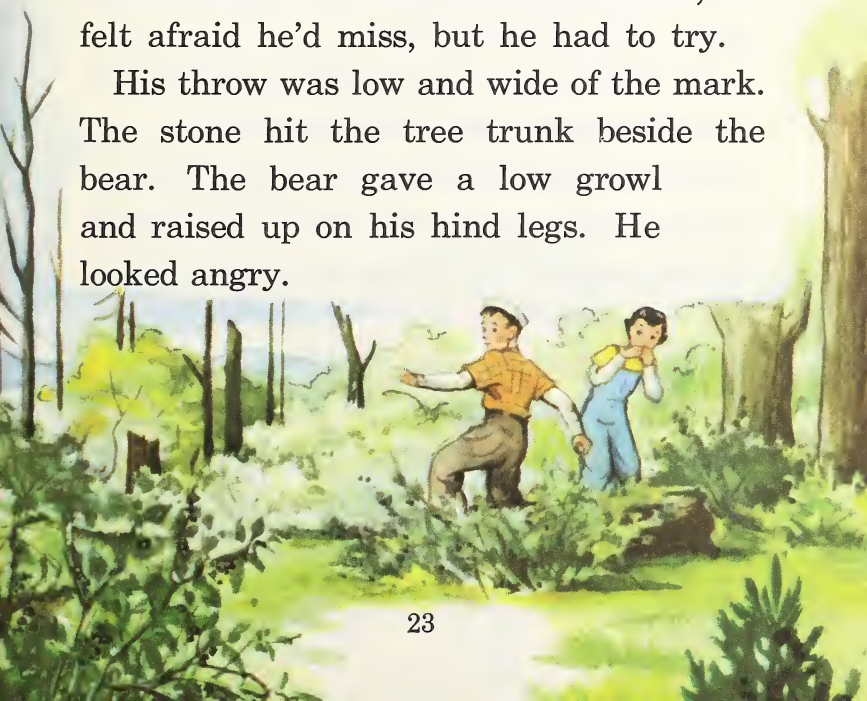
a chance of finding more berries. He had to do something and do it quickly.

Then an idea came to him. He reached into his pocket and felt the stones there. Slowly and carefully he pulled one out.

"Oh!" gasped Sally. "Don't you dare throw stones at that bear! It will make him mad!"

Clem didn't answer. He knew what he had to do. He drew back his arm. He was shaking so that it was hard for him to aim. Even before the stone left his hand, he felt afraid he'd miss, but he had to try.

His throw was low and wide of the mark. The stone hit the tree trunk beside the bear. The bear gave a low growl and raised up on his hind legs. He looked angry.





Sally was almost crying now. "Please don't, Clem. The bear will come after us!"

Clem took another stone from his pocket. He aimed carefully and drew back his arm. This time the stone flew straight to its mark — the hornets' nest.

The bear gave a low growl as the stone hit the hornets' nest. Sally gasped.

Then suddenly an army of hornets began to pour rapidly out of the nest. Their angry humming was like the sound of an airplane as they made straight for the bear and settled on his nose and ears and eyes.

The bear hit at them with his big paws. He tried to shake them off. He growled and snapped at them. But the hornets hung on tighter than ever.

The bear started to run. And how he ran! Clem hadn't thought a bear could run so fast. He rushed through the bushes and disappeared into the timber, followed by the whole army of hornets.

On shaking legs Clem ran for the large pail of berries. In a second or two, he and Sally were racing toward home.

They ran till they were at a safe distance. Then they stopped for breath.

"Weren't you afraid to throw that stone?" asked Sally. "I was so scared I nearly cried."

"I was scared," Clem said, "but I was mad too. I wasn't going to let any old bear eat our berries and keep Jim from having his jam."





Working with New Words

To read and think over

In your reading you are sure to meet words that you have not met before. They may look strange, but many of them will be words that you know well when you hear them spoken.

Do you know how to figure out what a strange word of that kind is? Here are two rules that will help you:

Rule 1: Think of a word that makes sense where the strange word stands.

Rule 2: Check the word by answering these four questions.

1. Does the word you thought of begin with the same sound as the strange word?

2. Do the two words seem to have the same first syllable?

3. Do they seem to have the same number of syllables?

4. Do the two words end alike?

If the correct answer to each question is yes, your word is probably the right one.

Working together

Following is the first part of a story. The words printed in heavy, black letters may be strange to you by sight, but you probably know every one when you hear it. Read the story. With your teacher helping you, use the two rules to figure out what each word in heavy, black letters is.

Fast Thinking

Uncle Billy Banks was a peddler. Twice a week he made **regular** trips up and down certain streets, selling fruits and vegetables that he had raised or had bought in the **market**.

He drove an old one-horse wagon that **rattled** along on shaky **wheels**. It looked and sounded as though it might fall apart at any **moment**.



Uncle Billy was the strongest **member** of his **outfit**. He was old, but he could still get around well and could make his voice heard above the **rattle** of the wagon and the **clatter** of the horse's feet on the **paved** streets.

Every housewife liked Uncle Billy because he was always in good **humor** and ready to make a joking reply to a question.

Help your class answer these questions:

1. What are the two rules to follow in figuring out a strange word? Talk over with your class the four questions given to help you use Rule 2.

2. Did your teacher ask you other questions about the strange word? What things did those questions make you do about the word?

To do by yourself

Here is the rest of the story. Use the two rules to figure out each heavy, black word.

One day Mrs. Lock asked Uncle Billy, "Have you some good new potatoes?"

"The finest in the world," Uncle Billy **declared** as he showed a basket of them.

"Those on top look good," said Mrs. Lock. "But maybe this basketful is like the one I bought two weeks ago. The potatoes on top were big, but those at the bottom were the size of **marbles**. Can you explain that?"

Uncle Billy **paused** for a moment. Then, with a **twinkle** in his eyes, he said, "Well, that was the first basketful I **dug**. I'm too old to dig potatoes very fast. The first few potatoes were small, but my potatoes grew so fast that before I got the basketful dug, the last ones were big like these."

Checking your work

If you are asked to do so, tell what you think each heavy, black word in the story is. If you made a mistake on any word, be sure to find out what that word is.



When Martha Toozle Caught a Nix

Once upon a time there lived a good woman named Martha Toozle. No one knows just when that was, but things must have been quite different in those days from what they are now. Things happened then that have never happened since and may never happen again.

Martha Toozle was a happy woman. She had a round, happy face and a rosy mouth that seemed to be made especially for smiling. And Martha could make the best apple pie in all the countryside.

Martha had a husband called George, and George had an old mother. Everyone called her Granny Tootle. They all lived in a little white cottage. Rose bushes grew about the doors and windows and climbed up along the white walls. A prettier little cottage could not be found.

All day long Martha kept busy in the kitchen and the dairy. All day long her husband, George, trudged behind his horses, plowing in the fields. All day long Granny Tootle sat knitting by the window through which she could look out and see the roses.

The Tootles found each other very good company. When evening came and work was done, they drew their chairs up around the fire and talked and laughed. They were all as happy as could be.

And then one morning Martha Tootle caught a nix.



It was Monday and washday. Martha went down to the well, drew up a pailful of water, and carried it up the path between the rows of rose bushes. Even though the well was a long distance from the cottage, she didn't spill a drop of water.

She went back and drew up a second pailful and carried it up without spilling a drop. She was just as lucky the third and fourth times she went to the well.

But the fifth time it was quite another matter. Before she was halfway to the cottage, she had spilled water all over her shoes, her stockings, and her apron.





“You’d think there was something alive in the pail!” she exclaimed. And there was! There was an ugly, wrinkled, and angry little nix!

Martha gasped. “My, my! What’s this!” she cried.

If in her surprise she had dropped the pail and let the ugly little nix get away, there would have been no story to tell. Instead, she set the pail carefully in the path and picked out the squealing nix by the back of the neck as though he were a half-drowned kitten.

“Ouch! Ouch! Let me go!” he cried as he struggled with all his might to free himself.

“Oh, no!” said Martha, shaking her head. “I must show you to my husband and to Granny Tootle. They’ll never believe there could be such an ugly, wrinkled creature unless they see you.”

The nix struggled harder than before. He scolded angrily. Then he growled and squawked like a wild creature. That did no good, so he screamed and cried and begged. But this did no good either. Martha still held him tight.

“You might just as well settle down and stop your screaming and struggling and begging,” she said. “I’ve never caught anything like you before and probably never will again. So I’ll just take time to think what to do with you.”

The nix stopped struggling and lowered his voice.

“Oh, all right!” he growled. “I suppose I’ll have to grant you a wish before you will let me go. Go ahead and wish for whatever you like, but remember, it will not come true till you let me go.”

“Whatever I like?” asked Martha. “You’ll grant me that?”

“Yes, yes!” said the nix impatiently. “Come! Be quick about it!”

“But I’d be sure to make a mistake if I wished in a hurry!” said Martha. “I’ll have to keep you till I’ve had time to think about it a little. Be patient.”

The nix screamed with rage and begged to be let go, but Martha only held him a little tighter and walked rapidly to the house. She took a big glass jar from the kitchen cupboard, half filled it with water, dropped the ugly, wrinkled creature into the jar, and put the cover on tight.

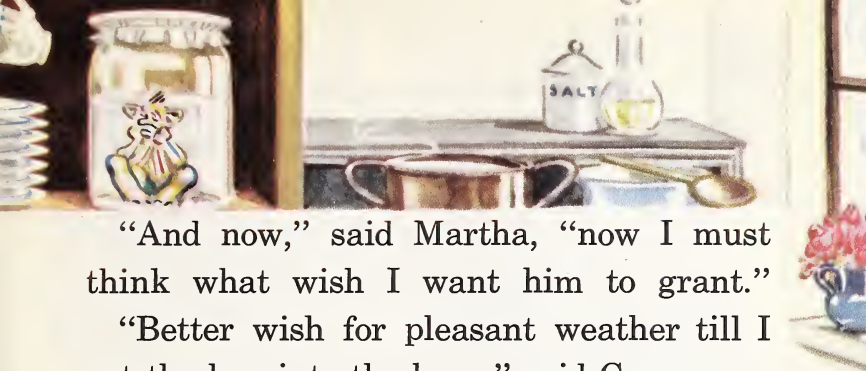




The nix saw that it was no use to struggle and rage any more just then, so he grew quiet. He sat and sulked in the bottom of the jar, but he wrinkled his face and scowled so fiercely that he was three times as ugly as before.

Granny Toozle put down her knitting and cleaned her glasses, because she could not believe what she saw through them. George was so surprised to see such an ugly creature that at first he could only stand with his mouth open.

Then while Martha told what had happened, the nix listened impatiently and continued to scowl and sulk.



"And now," said Martha, "now I must think what wish I want him to grant."

"Better wish for pleasant weather till I get the hay into the barn," said George.

"But what's the good of that?" asked Martha. "It may be pleasant without any wish at all. I think I'll wish for a new dress and a hat with feathers."

"A new dress!" scolded Granny Tootle. "Your Sunday dress will last you many a long year yet. It would be good sense to wish for a pair of stockings for George — a pair that won't wear out. That would save me a good bit of knitting."

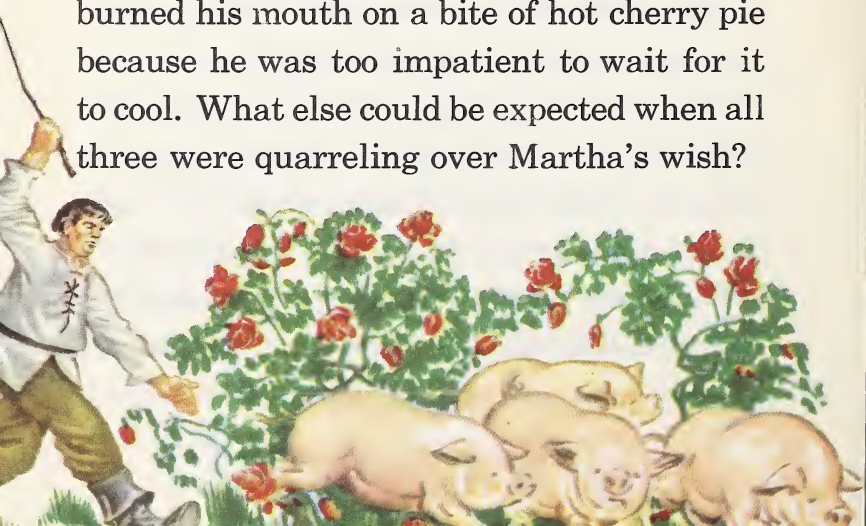
"I'll not waste my wish on stockings!" said Martha impatiently. "If I'm going to wish for something to save work, I'll wish the washing would do itself every Monday!"

"Washing is only play compared with work in the fields," growled George. "Why not wish the hay all cut and stored?"

The nix stopped sulking and started to rage again. But Martha, George, and Granny were busy talking and quarrelling. They took no more notice of his raging than they did of old dog Shep that lay asleep before the fire.

Very little work was done on the farm that day. The day was wasted. Everything seemed to go wrong. The cow spilled the milk and got into the corn. The colt got caught in the fence. The cat got into Granny's knitting. George found the pigs in the rosebeds digging up the bushes.

Granny lost her knitting needles. Martha spilled the jelly she was making. George burned his mouth on a bite of hot cherry pie because he was too impatient to wait for it to cool. What else could be expected when all three were quarreling over Martha's wish?



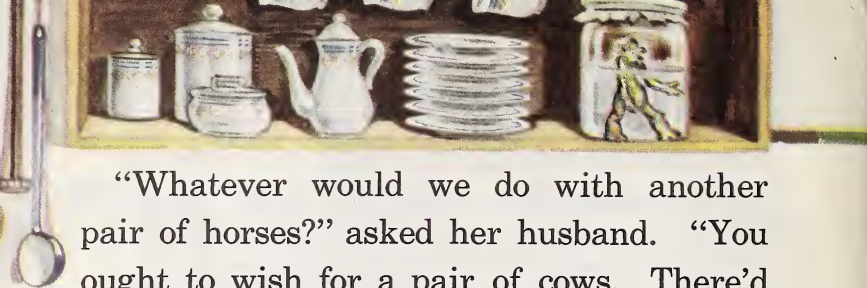


When bedtime came, the fierce little nix was no longer raging but was again sulking impatiently in the jar. Martha, her husband, and Granny were still quarrelling.

Next morning was worse. Compared to it, the day before had been happy. None of them had slept. They had wasted the whole night thinking of the things they wanted.

“If you had the trouble I have with my back, you’d wish cold winds would never come!” complained Granny.

“But my back is all right. I don’t have to complain about it,” said Martha impatiently. “I think I’ll wish for a golden coach and a pair of fine horses. Then I’ll be a great lady compared with the other women around these parts.”



“Whatever would we do with another pair of horses?” asked her husband. “You ought to wish for a pair of cows. There’d be some sense to that.”

But Martha would not agree to wish for cows. She said that was a wish she would never ask the nix to grant. She had more than enough milking as it was.

“I wish — ” she began.

“No! No!” cried Granny. “Don’t wish yet! There are so many things I want!”

“No one seems to care about the wishes I’d like granted,” complained George.

“I don’t think I should waste my wish on either of you,” snapped Martha. “You didn’t catch the nix. I have wishes of my own I’d like granted.”

“You should wish to be rid of your quarrelsome ways,” shouted George.

“So should you!” snapped Martha. “I’ve a good mind to wish you weren’t so ugly and good-for-nothing!”



They quarrelled through breakfast, and they quarrelled through lunch. They quarrelled till they were all worn out. Then for a time they just sat sulking and scowling at one another while the ugly little nix sulked and scowled at all of them.

At last Granny spoke.

"If you'd wish for a hundred dollars, we could all have something," she said. "You'd have thought of that long ago if you weren't such a selfish creature."

"If you weren't so selfish, you'd wish for two hundred dollars," George added.

"No matter how much I'd ask for, you'd be sure to blame me for not asking for more," declared Martha.

“Then wish for eight hundred dollars and have done with it!” George ordered her impatiently.

“That’s too much!” cried Granny in alarm. “We’d never get a night’s rest. We’d always be listening for someone coming to take it from us.”

“I’ll tell you what I really wish!” declared Martha angrily. “I wish I’d never caught that ugly little creature!” And she took the jar and threw it straight through an open window.





A minute later Martha, Granny, and George were looking at one another in great surprise, as if they had suddenly come out of a heavy fog into bright sunshine.

“Whatever’s happened?” asked Granny.

“I don’t know,” said George, scratching his head.

“I thought we were quarrelling about something,” said Martha.

“Quarrelling?” asked Granny softly, as she picked up her knitting. “But what should we quarrel about, my dear?”

“Yes, what?” asked George, smiling.

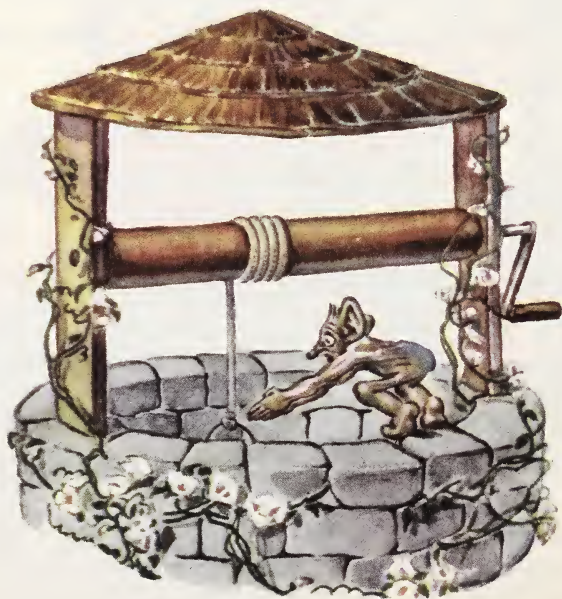
“We’ve never quarrelled in all our lives,” declared Granny.

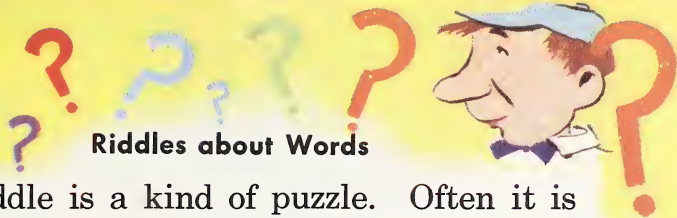
George hummed a gay tune as he started for the hayfield.

Martha began to laugh. “I wish I knew what put such a queer idea into my head,” she said as she went to her job of washing.

But the ugly little nix was no longer struggling and scowling in the jar. He was safe at the bottom of the well again. And now that he was free, he had no idea of granting wishes.

Martha continued to wonder about the quarrel. Often as she was going about her work, humming an old tune, she would feel that she was just about to remember what had happened. But she never did. Not one of them ever remembered that Martha caught a nix.





Riddles about Words

A riddle is a kind of puzzle. Often it is a question that has a tricky answer to puzzle out. The answer is tricky because it is not the one you expect.

Is the answer to the following riddle the one that you expect? Why or why not?

Why can fairies never be heavy? Because so much of “fairies” is “air.”

Now try to puzzle out the answer to each of the following five riddles about words.

The answers are on page 46. Don't look at them until you have tried every riddle.

1. How can a man use overcoats to make feed for a horse?

2. Why is “smiles” the longest word in the world?

3. What is curious about the word “shaped”?

4. What is it that you find only once in any room but twice in any corner?

5. Why are the first and last letters of “brown” like two quarrelling boys?



For a Laugh or Two

TOM: Here is a riddle for you, Sally: What is the difference between a mailbox and an elephant?

SALLY: I don't know.

TOM: You don't! Then I'll never trust you to mail my letters.

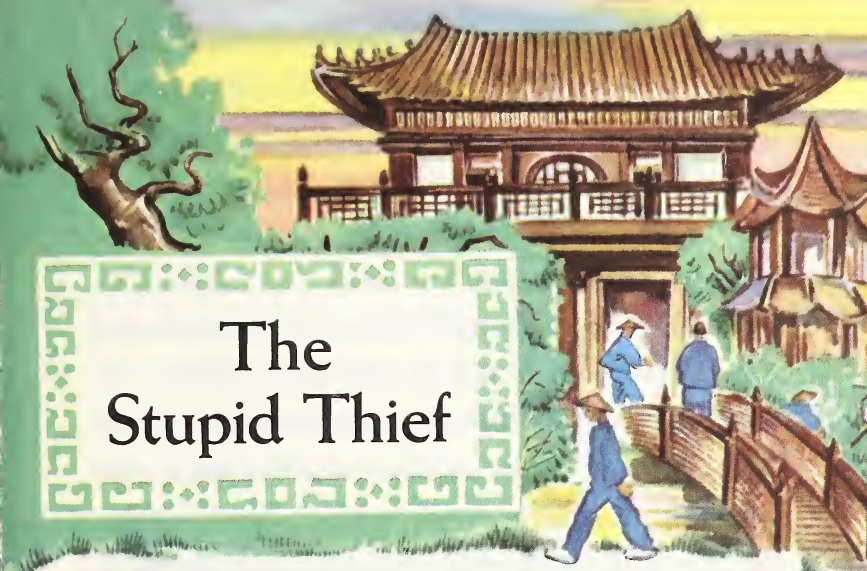
MR. SAW: Doctor, will I be able to read with these new glasses you made for me?

DOCTOR: Certainly you will, Mr. Saw.

MR. SAW: That's wonderful! I've never known how to read.

Answers to riddles on page 45:

1. He can take the "oats" out of "overcoats."
2. Because there is a "mile" between the first letter and the last letter of "smiles."
3. There is an "ape" in "shaped."
4. The letter "r."
5. Because there is a "row" between them.



The Stupid Thief

Long ago, in a far-off Chinese city, lived a rich man. He owned a very large house and was the master of many servants. He also had a very costly ring that he prized highly. One morning he discovered that his ring had disappeared, but he told no one about it.

The master had good reason to believe a servant had stolen the ring, but he didn't know which one to accuse. However, he felt sure that a servant stupid enough to be a thief would be stupid enough to be caught by a trick.

That night he had a servant bring to him a large number of chopsticks, all exactly the same length. Then from under his coat he drew out one that was an inch longer than the rest and put it with them.

He let the servant watch while he tied the chopsticks into a bundle. Then he wrapped a cloth around the bundle so that only one end of the sticks could be seen. He knew that the servant would immediately tell the other servants what he had seen.

The next morning he sent for all his servants, but before they arrived he took the long chopstick out of the bundle.

When the servants came in, the master had them stand in a half-circle in front of him. Then he took up the bundle of sticks and told the servants that each of them was to come up and draw out a stick.



As each servant came forward to make his drawing, the master watched every move. From the way he acted, the servants knew that he must be trying to figure out some important problem, but only the thief could guess what it was. He didn't dare to say a word to anyone about it.

Silently each servant came forward, drew out a chopstick, and returned to his place in the half-circle. When the drawing was finished, the master laid down the sticks that remained. Then he paused and let his gaze travel slowly from one end of the half-circle to the other.

At last he said, "A costly ring of mine has been stolen. I am looking for the thief. I do not wish to accuse any one of you unjustly. I had you draw the chopsticks, because, in that way, I can tell for sure whether one of you is the thief. I shall soon know."

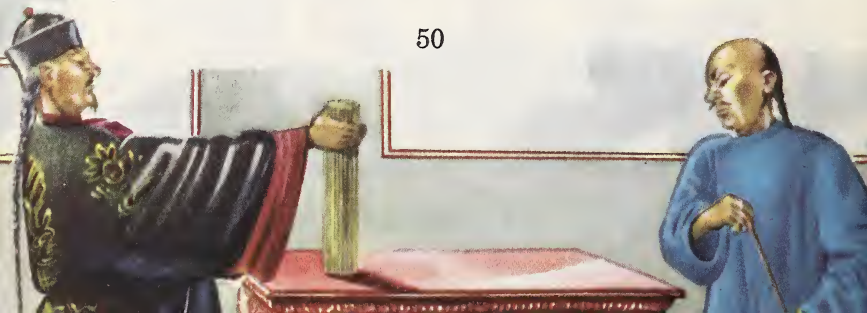
Again the master paused and let his gaze travel slowly from one end of the half-circle to the other. Then he continued:

"Last night I had a large number of chopsticks brought to me. From them I picked out several to make a bundle. I chose sticks that were exactly the same length. They were just common chopsticks, the kind you use every day.

"But before I tied and wrapped the bundle, I put another stick into it. That stick is exactly one inch longer than the rest. It looks just like a common chopstick, but it is my magic stick.

"In a drawing like this, when my magic stick is in the bundle, it is sure to be drawn by a thief. That is what the wise men say."

Once more the master paused. And once more his gaze moved slowly around the half-circle. Then he said, "Now we will see whether my magic stick has been drawn out."



Very slowly the master unwrapped the remaining sticks and held them so that they stood on end on the table. Not one stick stuck up higher than another. They were all exactly the same length.

“My magic stick has been drawn out,” said the master coolly. “That can mean only one thing. One of you stole the ring. One of you is a common thief.”

The servants stood as if they were stuck to the floor. The thief never doubted that he had drawn the magic stick. He wanted to run away but he didn't dare.

After a little while the master said, “Now I can easily find out who stole my ring. I think I know who the thief is, but I will not accuse him here. I will give him a chance to confess. If he wishes to confess, let him come to me within an hour. Go back to your work now.”





The stupid thief felt easier. He had expected to be accused then and there of stealing the ring. Now he decided that he was lucky and that it would be foolish to confess. The stupid fellow never doubted that he was smart enough to keep from being caught. Soon he had a big idea.

“How easy!” he exclaimed to himself as he went to work on his idea. “The master didn’t accuse me. I would have been foolish to confess. I’ll fix that magic stick so the master won’t know it from the rest. I’m smart! I’m clever.” He almost laughed out loud.

The master wasn’t at all surprised that the thief failed to come and confess. He had doubted that the thief would come to him.

When the hour was up, the master called the servants together. Then he ordered them to lay their chopsticks side by side in a neat row on the table. He had them place the chopsticks so that the ends were exactly even.

One by one they came up and laid down their sticks. The thief was so sure of his trick that he waited to be the last one.

Eagerly he placed his stick at the end of the row beside the others. Then the foolish fellow gasped in open-mouthed surprise. His chopstick was exactly one inch shorter than the rest. The stupid fellow had cut off an inch of it.

Now there was no doubt about who had stolen the ring. By his own foolish act, the thief had accused himself.





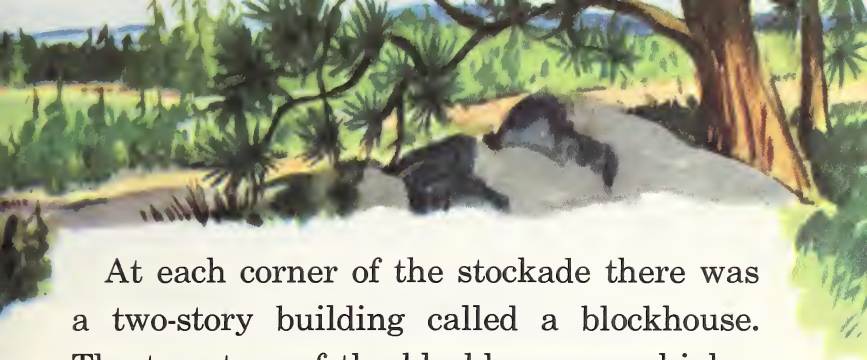
Stockades

Early settlers in Canada were often attacked by Indians. That is not strange. The Indians didn't like to see white men settle on their lands, cut down their forests, and drive off the wild animals that the Indians needed so badly for food and clothes.

Because of the danger of Indian attacks, several families of settlers often placed their cabins close together and then built a stockade around the cabins.

A stockade was a high, strong fence that was made of pointed logs set side by side. In the fence there was a gate that could be closed at night and in time of danger.

Building a stockade was such hard work that the settlers put it only around the cabins. The fields and gardens were outside.



At each corner of the stockade there was a two-story building called a blockhouse. The top story of the blockhouse was higher than the stockade and had narrow openings in the wall through which the men could fire their guns.

When there was danger of an Indian attack, lookouts kept watch at the openings. As soon as Indians were sighted, the lookouts would signal the men to come in from the fields and close the stockade gate.

To be ready for an attack, the settlers had to have a supply of food and water in the stockade. They found that the easiest way to have a supply of water was to build their stockade around a spring.

The story that comes next tells what some early settlers did when Indians were about to attack them and when the spring inside the stockade ran dry.

Jemima Johnson

A True Story

Betsy Johnson stopped work to wipe her face on her apron. It was a hot morning even for the middle of summer. Washing the breakfast dishes had made Betsy feel still hotter.

But, at last, all the dishes were washed and wiped. Sally, who was just a little younger than Betsy, began to pour out the dishwater.



"Don't pour out the water," said Betsy. "Mother wants us to save it for the noon dishes."

"Why?" asked Sally.

"Because the little spring here inside the stockade is almost dry," replied Betsy. "Now we'll have to carry water from the big spring outside. It's a long way from our cabin to the big spring. Carrying our supply of water that far will be hard work."

"I can do hard work," said Sally. "I'll go out and get some water right now."

"Not unless Mother says you may," said Betsy. "I don't think she'll let you go. Some Indians in war paint have been seen close by."

"Oh, I'm tired of hearing big tales about Indians," complained Sally. "Mother let me go with Jane to pick berries in the forest the other day. We didn't see any Indians. When Mother comes back from Mrs. Brown's cabin, I'll ask her if I may go. Do you think she'll let me?"



“No, I don’t,” said Betsy. “Anyhow, the baby’s awake now. Will you wipe his face with a wet cloth and give him a cool drink? Please don’t waste any water.”

While Sally sang a little song to the baby, Betsy put away the dishes. Then she looked out the door at her two little brothers who were playing outside. She wanted to be sure they were all right. As she stood in the doorway, she saw her mother hurrying toward the cabin.

Jemima Johnson was usually as happy and as light-hearted as a young girl. She laughed at little jokes with the children. She often sang to them and even whistled merry little tunes. Now, as she came nearer, Betsy saw that she was not gay at all.



“Here comes Mother,” Betsy called.
“She looks worried. Something is wrong.”

The two girls went out to meet their mother.

“What’s the matter?” asked Sally.

“Come and sit here beside me on this log where we’ll be out of the hot sun,” said Jemima. “I want to talk to you.”

The two girls sat down beside their mother in the shadow of the cabin. Jemima wiped her hot face before she spoke.

“A messenger from the fort has just come to the stockade,” said Mrs. Johnson. “He has bad news.”

“What did he say, Mother? Tell us!” begged Betsy.

“The messenger said that the Indians are planning to attack us,” said Mrs. Johnson.

Sally gasped, and Betsy held tight to her mother's hand.

"When?" whispered Betsy.

"No one knows," said Mrs. Johnson. "We must hold out until the soldiers come from the fort. The lookout in the blockhouse signaled to the men to return to the stockade. They are all safely inside now, and the gate is closed.

"The messenger says the Indians are in the forest near our stockade right now. There are at least two hundred of them. A few of them are coming out of the forest to let themselves be seen."

"Why are they doing that?" asked Betsy.

"It's a trap," said Jemima. "They probably know that we have only forty men in the stockade. They think that if only a few of them let themselves be seen, our men will leave the stockade to attack them.



“Then, as soon as our men make an attack, the rest of the two hundred Indians will rush out of the forest. Our little band of forty men will be trapped, and the Indians will kill them. We women and children will be left with no one to protect us.”

“But if no men go outside the stockade, we’ll be safe,” said Betsy. “The men can stay inside to protect us.”

“Yes, dear, but someone must go out,” said Jemima. “We need water from the big spring.”

“Haven’t we enough water for today?” asked Betsy.

“Hardly,” replied Mrs. Johnson. “And there is no way of knowing how long the attack may last. It may last for days. We must try to hold out until the soldiers come from the fort, and we must have water in this hot weather.”

“If the men can’t go outside the stockade, who will go for water?” asked Betsy.

“I am going,” said Jemima. “So are some of the other women and some older girls.”

"I'll go with you," said Betsy bravely.

"I will too," declared Sally.

"No, Sally," said Mrs. Johnson. "You must stay here and look after the boys and the baby. Betsy will go with me.

"We all think that if we act as if we didn't know the Indians were there they won't harm us. Their trick is no good if they attack while the men are still in the stockade."

"Are you sure they won't attack us when we go to the spring?" asked Betsy.

"No," said Jemima, "but we have to take that chance."

"Oh, please don't take Betsy," begged Sally. "Let some of the other girls go."

"I have asked every mother who will go to take at least one of her children," said Mrs. Johnson. "I must take one of mine."

Betsy and Mrs. Johnson went into the cabin and came out with pails and a pitcher for carrying water. Sally stood in the doorway with her little brothers. It was hard for her to keep from crying as she watched her mother and Betsy leave.

Women and children came out of several cabins, carrying pitchers and pails. In a short time, eleven brave women and sixteen children were standing at the gate of the stockade, ready to go out. Every woman had a pail in each hand, and every child had a pitcher or a small pail.

Before the gate was opened, Jemima said to the women and children, "Pretend you don't see the Indians. Don't look at them, even if they are in plain sight. Pretend that you are not afraid of anything."

As the large gate of the stockade was opened, the eleven women and sixteen children walked bravely out with their pails and pitchers. They talked and laughed as if they were going to a picnic.





About a hundred yards from the stockade, they came to the top of a hill. Out of the corner of her eye, Betsy saw an Indian at the edge of the forest. He had war paint all over his face, and he looked very frightening.

Betsy was afraid, but she kept on talking and laughing with the others as they went down the hill to the big spring.

At the spring, Mrs. Johnson said softly, "Don't hurry. Fill your pails and pitchers just as you would at any other time. And remember to talk and laugh. Pretend you're having a good time."

Jemima looked calm and unafraid, even though her hands trembled a little as she helped fill the pails and pitchers. Her courage helped the other women and the children to act bravely even though danger was so near.

As soon as the first women and children had filled their pails and pitchers, Jemima said, "Now start back to the stockade. Keep looking straight ahead as you go. Don't hurry. Keep laughing and talking."

Jemima waited until the last pails were filled before she started back. All the way back to the stockade, she kept talking calmly to those ahead of her. Quietly she warned them not to look back or to appear frightened.

The return trip was long and hard and hot. The pails and pitchers seemed to get heavier and heavier. Arms and legs and backs hurt, but not one of the women or children complained.



At last they reached the stockade. The gate was opened, the brave band went inside, and the gate was closed.

"We've done it!" cried Mrs. Johnson. "We've done it!"

She didn't seem able to say any more. Betsy noticed that her mother's face was white and her voice trembled.

All that day and all the next day, a few Indians showed themselves now and then at the edge of the forest. But the little band of forty men didn't walk into the trap.

Finally, late on the third day, the Indians rushed on the stockade with a great war cry. But the attack came too late.



Before the Indians could do any real harm, the soldiers came from the fort, and the Indians were trapped between the stockade and the forest. Many Indians were killed. A few escaped into the forest and never came back.

After that, life in the stockade went on as before. But Betsy had learned a lesson in courage which she never forgot.

When Betsy had children of her own, she often told them the story of her mother. They never grew tired of hearing how Jemima Johnson and the little band of women and children helped the men in the stockade escape the trap the Indians had set for them.



Finding Root Words

Read this page and the pages that follow. Think what each statement or question means. Decide how to answer each question and how to do what you are told to do.

What ending is added to **borrow** to make **borrowed**? to make **borrowing**? to make **borrows**? to make **borrower**?

The words **borrowed**, **borrowing**, **borrows**, and **borrower** are all called forms of the word **borrow**. Each one of them is made by adding an ending to **borrow**. The word **borrow** is the root word of that group.

Find the root word in each word below:

coldly	colder	colds	coldest
parted	partly	parts	parting

What happens to silent **e** in the words **take**, **give**, and **come** when the ending **ing** is added to make **taking**, **giving**, and **coming**?

What root word is used in making each of these word forms?

facing **bouncing** **behaving** **handling**

How is the form of the root word **cry** changed in making **cries**, **cried**, and **crier**?

It will help you figure out root words if you remember that **y** at the end of a root word is usually changed to **i** before an ending such as **al**, **er**, **ed**, **ly**, or **est** is added.

What root word was used in building each of the word forms in this group?

driest **easily** **trial** **replied** **supplies**

Which letter of the root word **hop** is repeated in **hopped**, **hopper**, and **hopping**?

When the last letter of a root word is repeated before an ending is added, we say that the last letter is doubled.

The last letter of **bag** is doubled before the ending **y** is added to make **baggy**.

The last letter of **hot** is doubled in making **hotter** and **hottest**.

Think how to answer these three questions about each of the word forms below.

What is the root word in it? What ending was added? What letter was doubled?

digger	dropping	saddest	bitten
sunny	cutter	hummed	foggy

Common Endings — *less* and *ness*

The syllable **less** is a common ending which is added to root words. You know that it means about the same as the word **without** or as the two words, **not having**.

A man without a coat is coatless.

An endless story would be one that went on and on, a story not having an ending.

Read each of the following statements and decide whether it is true or not true. Think out the reason for what you decide.

1. On a cloudless day we are sure to have bright sunshine.

2. Any animal that is legless is footless.

3. A wooden pencil is useless for writing or drawing when it is pointless.

4. Anyone can easily find his way through a pathless forest in the dark.

5. Thoughtless drivers are careless drivers.

6. A backless chair is called a stool.

7. Some animals are footless, legless, armless, and wingless, but they get around very well.

Say the words **bigness**, **kindness**, **darkness**, **freshness**, and **wildness**. Do you see and hear that the first part of each of those words is a root word that you know and that the last part is the syllable **ness**?

A word that ends with the syllable **ness** is always the name of something, but it is something that you cannot pick up or handle.

People who always do kind acts have something that we call kindness. Things that shine brightly have brightness.

Which of the following words means about the same as the word gladness?

ripeness crossness happiness sickness

Match each word in the first line below with a word in the second line to make a pair of words that have about the same meaning.

neatness	nearness	sadness
unhappiness	closeness	tidiness

Which of these does a juggler need?

wildness	darkness	cleverness
-----------------	-----------------	-------------------

Which of these does ice have?

meanness	coldness	warmness
-----------------	-----------------	-----------------

Often you will find a root word which has a syllable such as **re**, **un**, **dis**, or **mis**, that has been added at the front of it. A syllable added there is called a **prefix**.

The word **miscount** is made by putting the syllable **mis** in front of the word **count**.

What is the prefix and what is the root word in each word of this group?

retell **unlike** **displease** **mistake**

Sometimes a root word has both a prefix and an ending that have been added.

Find the prefix, the root word, and the added ending in each of these words:

repacked **unthoughtful** **mistaken**

Read each of the following statements and decide whether it is true or not and why:

1. The two boys are so unlike that it is easy to mistake one for the other.

2. A boy or a girl who is unthoughtful of others is almost sure to be disliked.

3. Tom wanted to hear the story retold because it displeased him greatly.

4. A person cannot repack a bag unless it has already been packed.

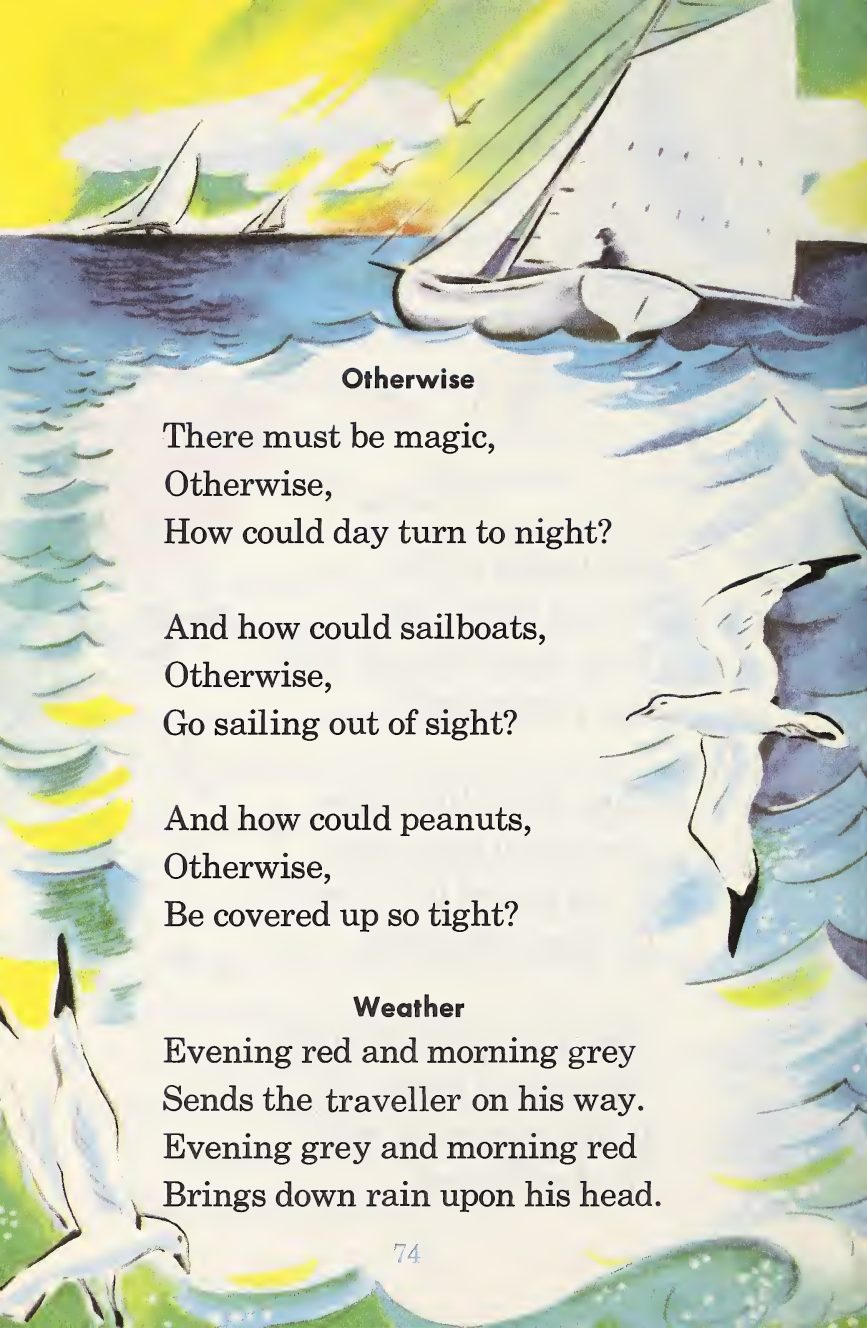


Drawing

The people I draw
Have a funny look;
They're not like the ones
In a picture book.

They're not like those
You would ever meet
If you looked in the parks
Or along the street.

They're not like the ones
They would have to be
If they wanted to walk
Or play like me.



Otherwise

There must be magic,
Otherwise,
How could day turn to night?

And how could sailboats,
Otherwise,
Go sailing out of sight?

And how could peanuts,
Otherwise,
Be covered up so tight?

Weather

Evening red and morning grey
Sends the traveller on his way.
Evening grey and morning red
Brings down rain upon his head.

A Lion in the Kitchen



The summer day was warm. Agnes Muir sat all alone in the shadow of a big tree that stood near the farmhouse. Old Shep, the family dog, was stretched out at her feet. Her little sister was asleep in the one big upstairs room of the house.

Nobody else was at home. All the other Muirs had gone to a big barbecue at Cool Springs. Early that morning they had climbed into the big wagon and driven off. Agnes knew that they would be gone all day. At noon there would be a big barbecue. Everyone would have lots of fun.

Agnes thought about all the fun she was missing. She felt sadder and sadder. Now and then a tear fell on an apron she was making. But Agnes knew all too well why she had been left at home that pleasant summer day.

Agnes wasn't a bad girl. She was really very good most of the time. She did her lessons well in school. She had learned to cook, to bake bread, to make jam and jelly, and to sew a little. She helped her mother wash clothes and clean house, and she never complained about doing that work.

Agnes was a kind-hearted girl, too. Once when Old Shep hurt his foot badly, she wrapped it in a piece of clean old sheet. Then she made a bed for him by the fireplace where he could stay until he got well.

Agnes was nearly always cheerful. She sang or whistled as she worked. When her work was done, she took time to play with her younger sisters and help them with their lessons. She was never happier than when she was with them.



But Agnes had one bad habit. Sometimes she told things that were not exactly true. Some of her big stories were built up from things she had heard about. Many were just big tales about little things that had happened to her.

For example, if she saw a little bobcat running along in the forest near her home, she wouldn't come in quietly and say, "I just saw a little bobcat in the woods." That didn't sound exciting enough.

Instead of that, she would probably rush in, almost breathless, and exclaim, "I just saw a great, big wildcat! It jumped out of the bushes and growled at me! If I hadn't run as fast as I could, it would have eaten me up!"

Agnes didn't really mean to tell tales that weren't true. She just enjoyed having people get excited over her stories.

Her mother and father had tried to stop the habit. They had warned and reasoned and scolded, but everything seemed to fail.

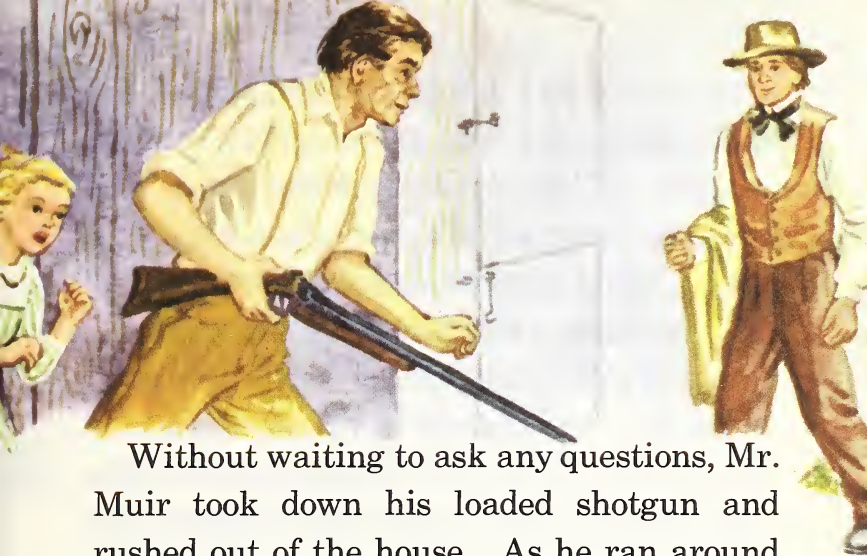
"We'll have to find some other way," said her mother one day. "Let's try making her give up something she likes to do."

"That's a good idea," declared Mr. Muir. "We'll do that the very next time she tells us something that isn't true."

They didn't have to wait long for the next time. The very next day Agnes saw a man coming out of the woods. She rushed into the house, almost out of breath.

"A horse thief!" she gasped. "Quick, Father! He's coming out of the woods behind the barn!"

Mr. Muir couldn't take time to find out whether the tale was true. He knew that any thief would be delighted to steal the two fine colts that were in the barn. He also knew that a thief would work fast.



Without waiting to ask any questions, Mr. Muir took down his loaded shotgun and rushed out of the house. As he ran around the corner of the barn, he nearly knocked over a man. Luckily, before he raised his gun to fire, he saw who the man was.

It was not a horse thief at all. It was the schoolteacher. He was a man that Agnes had seen day after day and knew well.

The teacher looked surprised. "Are you in some trouble, Mr. Muir?" he asked kindly.

"No — no — I guess not," replied Mr. Muir, looking very red-faced and feeling very foolish. He realized that he had been misled by one of Agnes's tales and that the outcome might have been very serious.

"I just came by to remind you of the barbecue at Cool Springs tomorrow," said the teacher. "You know that there is to be a meeting there to talk over plans for a new road. Bring your whole family. There will be a big dinner and fun for everybody."

Agnes was glad to hear about the barbecue. Until two days ago she had been hoping that she and her big brother might go to a circus that was to be in a town some sixteen miles away.

She had seen a circus poster that showed pictures of clowns turning somersaults and of elephants doing tricks. The most interesting picture was one that showed a man making a lion sit up. It was a big, fierce-looking lion, and it had its mouth wide open.



But her father had decided that the circus was too far away. The trip would take too long and would cost too much.

So Agnes felt very glad to have a barbecue to go to. That wouldn't be as much fun as a circus, but it would be more fun than staying at home.

"A barbecue!" she exclaimed. "Oh, that will be wonderful!"

Mr. Muir looked at Agnes very seriously. Then he spoke slowly: "You are not going to the barbecue, Agnes. You are going to stay here and take care of your little sister. Maybe staying at home will help you think how much harm it can do to tell stories that are not true."

That is how it happened that Agnes was sitting all alone under the big tree.

"I know I shouldn't make up big stories," she said to herself. "That one I told about the teacher might have cost him his life. I'll be more careful."

Agnes got up and looked around. Shep sat up and looked at her.

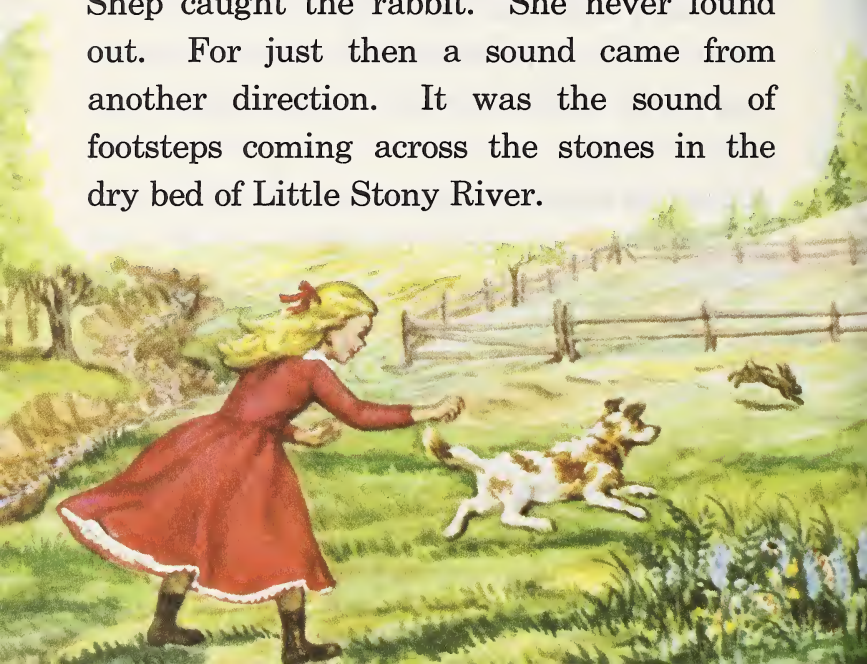
"Shep, I wish something exciting would happen," she said. "Then I wouldn't have to make up a story."

A rabbit went hopping by. The old dog noticed it and started after it in a half-hearted way.

"Run, Shep!" she called. "You can catch it."

The rabbit had a different idea. Off into the woods it raced, with Shep following as fast as his old legs could go.

Agnes stood listening to hear whether Shep caught the rabbit. She never found out. For just then a sound came from another direction. It was the sound of footsteps coming across the stones in the dry bed of Little Stony River.





Agnes turned around quickly and found herself face to face with a man she had never seen before. His clothes were ragged and dirty. His face was covered with a heavy black beard and had a mean look. Agnes was frightened. She knew the man had not come to do any good.

“I’ve come for a pair of colts,” he said. “I bought them from your father at the barbecue.”

Agnes knew that couldn’t be true. Only the day before, she had heard her father say that he wouldn’t trade that pair of colts for a gold mine. She was sure that this man was a horse thief and that he had not expected to find anyone at home.

She tried to think what to do. If only Shep had not chased off after that rabbit! She thought of her father's shotgun, but it was in the house, and it was too heavy for an eleven year old girl to handle.

"Where are the colts?" the thief asked impatiently. "I'm in a hurry."

Agnes drew herself up straight and looked the thief right in the eye.

"You'd better get away from here," she said. Her voice trembled, but she made it sound as big and as cross as she could. "I know my father didn't sell you any colts."

The thief just grinned. "What if he didn't?" he asked as he started toward the barn.

Suddenly Agnes had an idea! A big idea!

"Don't you dare go out there!" she warned the man. "Don't touch those colts!"

The thief turned and laughed at her.

"Go away!" shouted Agnes. "Go away or I'll set a big lion on you. My father keeps one in the kitchen. He's so big and fierce he will snap your head off in one bite."

The thief scowled at Agnes. Then he came up to her and laughed in an ugly, mean way.

“Do you think I believe that story?” he asked. “Go ahead and turn out your fierce lion. Set him on me. I don’t care. I’m going to have the colts.”

Agnes was more frightened than ever. Her big idea, her big story, had failed. She hadn’t scared the thief at all. Suddenly she turned and ran rapidly into the house.

“Hurry up and turn him out!” the thief called as she disappeared through the doorway. Then he laughed louder than ever as he started toward the barn again.



Agnes had hardly got inside the house when she heard a scream of fright. She rushed outside to see what had happened.

There stood the thief as if he were made of stone. His face was as white as a sheet of the whitest paper. No wonder! A big yellow lion was facing him.

The thief was so frightened that he turned and ran to Agnes and tried to hide behind her. "Help!" he cried. "Save me!"

Agnes herself was too frightened to move. For a second or two she just stood and looked foolishly at the big lion as he walked along, waving his tail. She wasn't imagining this. It was a real, live lion.





“Save me! Save me!” begged the thief.
“Hide me somewhere!”

The door of the springhouse was only a few feet away. Agnes ran to it and opened it quickly. “Get in there!” she ordered, and the thief lost no time in jumping inside. Agnes shut the door and locked it.

Her legs were shaking, but she knew that she must try to get to the house. Luckily, the lion didn’t seem to be hungry. He was just walking around smelling of things and not paying any special attention to Agnes.

She ran to the kitchen door. She didn't stop to close it, for she heard the lion coming after her. Up the steep stairway she went almost in one jump and shut the door at the top of the stairs. As she locked it she heard the lion at the foot of the stairs.

It seemed a long time before she could get her breath and stop trembling, but at last she became calm enough to think what to do.

She unlocked the door very quietly. Then she opened it just a little crack to see whether the lion was still at the foot of the stairs. He was. He was just sitting there gazing up at her as if he expected her to come down.

"Go away, you old lion!" she called, but the lion didn't move an inch.





She looked for something to throw at him, but all she could find was an old hat. That pleased him. For a while he played with it as a kitten plays with a ball. Then he settled down, put his head on the hat, and went to sleep.

“He’s just waiting until I have to go downstairs,” Agnes thought. “Then he’ll eat me. Probably he’ll eat the whole family when they come home.”

Before Agnes could do any more worrying about being eaten by the lion, she heard someone at the front door. “Maybe it’s another thief,” she thought.

“Hello in there!” a pleasant voice called. “Is anyone at home?”

Agnes felt it was safe to go to the small window and look out. Two men were at the front door.

"What do you want?" she called down.

"We're from the circus," one of the men said. "Old King, our big lion, got away. We tracked him to this place. Have you seen a lion around here? I'm his keeper."

Before Agnes could answer, the other man said, "Old King is the biggest and best lion we ever had. I'm his trainer."

"He's asleep in our kitchen," Agnes told the men. Then she wondered whether they would believe such a story. So she said it another way. "There's a big lion in our kitchen. He is sound asleep."

Agnes was curious to see what would happen when the men found the lion. She opened the door and looked down. Nothing exciting happened. The lion just sat up and gazed at the men.

The men laughed when they saw Agnes's scared little face looking down at them from the top of the stairs.



"I don't blame you for being frightened," said the keeper as he patted the lion's head, "but Old King wouldn't hurt you."

"But he's a lion," said Agnes. "He's a real live lion, and lions eat people."

"Not Old King," said the trainer. "He wouldn't harm anybody."

"I'm glad the horse thief didn't know that," said Agnes.

"Horse thief?" asked the keeper.

"There's a horse thief in the spring-house," Agnes declared proudly. "A real live horse thief. I caught him."

Now it was the circus men's turn to be surprised. They asked a lot of questions, and Agnes was very proud to tell them just what had happened. She didn't make the tale one bit bigger than it really was.

As soon as the family came home, Agnes told the story all over again, and even then she didn't make it one bit bigger.

That evening some officers came and took the horse thief out of the springhouse. They led him away to be locked up in a safer place. Everyone but the thief was delighted at that.

For months and months after that, the neighbors talked about how the thief was caught. "Have you heard how brave little Agnes Muir caught a horse thief all by herself?" they would ask.

And can you believe it? Agnes herself was changed. She no longer wanted to stretch a story to make it exciting. She knew that it was best to tell things just as they happened.





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The Monkey with a Notion



One Monday night Miss Peasley was getting ready to close her pet shop for the night. Every evening at exactly the same time, she did exactly the same things in exactly the same way. Miss Peasley said this kept her from becoming forgetful.

She often told her friends, "I may not be so young as I used to be, but I'm certainly not getting forgetful."

First she fed her birds. She began with her canaries because she always had fed them first. After the birds were fed, Miss Peasley put a cloth over each cage so that they would settle down and go to sleep.

Then she fed her goldfish. They flashed in the light as they went after the little pieces of fish food.

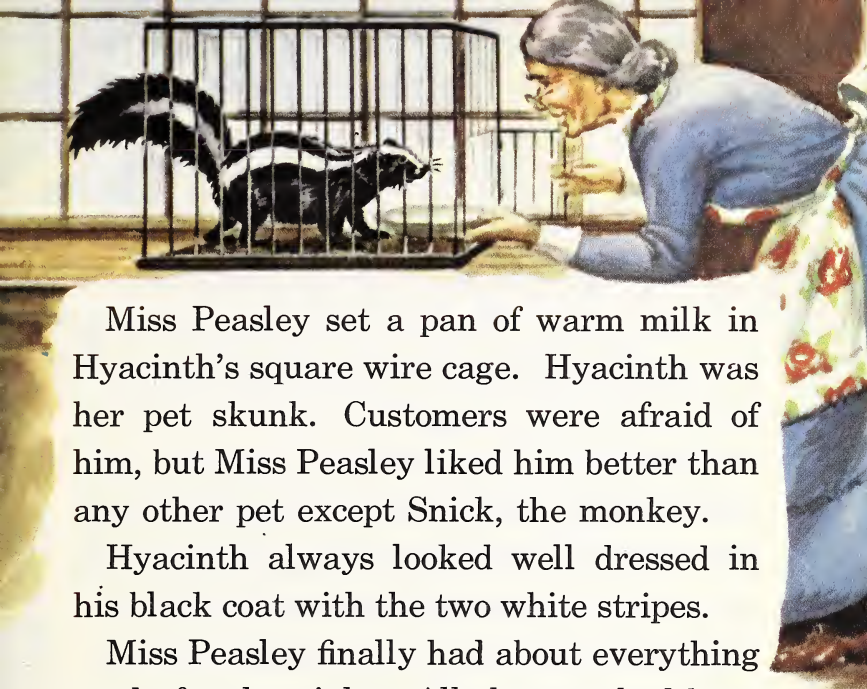
Miss Peasley was a good person to run a pet shop. She liked animals and birds, and they liked her. She never forgot to feed them, and she always kept them neat and clean.

No pet store had better supplies for sale than Miss Peasley had in hers. She kept fish food, dog food, and cat food. She kept bird seed, bird cages, and everything else a bird could want. But, sad to say, she kept her supplies longer than she wanted to, because business was very poor.

There was one big reason why Miss Peasley failed to have much business. She didn't like to have children come into her shop.

There is no doubt that children are noisy, and that they track dirt into a shop. Miss Peasley didn't like noise and she hated dirt. She didn't hate children, but the children knew that she spoke crossly when they went into her store. Few of them ever visited the shop more than once.

That was too bad, because children are the best customers that a pet shop can have. All children like pets.

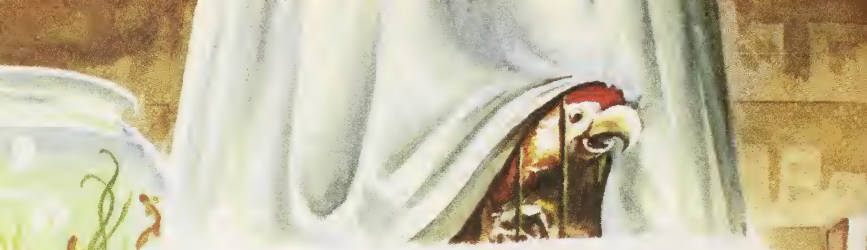


Miss Peasley set a pan of warm milk in Hyacinth's square wire cage. Hyacinth was her pet skunk. Customers were afraid of him, but Miss Peasley liked him better than any other pet except Snick, the monkey.

Hyacinth always looked well dressed in his black coat with the two white stripes.

Miss Peasley finally had about everything ready for the night. All the pets had been fed, and everything was in order. There was one last thing to do. She put Snick, her lively monkey, into his cage.

During the day, she let the monkey run around the shop, but at night she put him into his cage and latched the cage door carefully. She didn't want him running and climbing about the shop when she wasn't there. Snick wasn't a bad monkey, but Miss Peasley liked to keep an eye on him.



When Miss Peasley opened the door to leave the shop, the little bell on the front door tinkled loudly, as it did every time the door opened or closed.

The tinkle of the bell was a signal to let Miss Peasley know when a customer came into the shop. She could hear it even when she was in the storeroom behind the shop.

When Reba, the parrot, heard the bell, she looked out from under the cover of her cage. "REmarkable," she said. Reba always said the "RE" louder than the "markable," and she always said "REmarkable" when the bell on the door tinkled.

As Miss Peasley closed the door, she thought, "Reba is right. It is remarkable when that bell rings. I have too few customers. I should have lots of customers. Don't people like pets? Perhaps Hyacinth keeps customers away."



Every evening for a long time, Snick had watched Miss Peasley latch the door of his cage. Every morning he had watched her unlatch it again. Right after Miss Peasley left the shop, Snick took a notion to try what he had seen her do.

He climbed up the side of his cage, stuck one front paw through the bars, and wiggled the latch. Nothing happened. Then he put both front paws through the bars. He pushed his nose against the door as he wiggled the latch again.

Suddenly the cage door flew open and Snick was free. He scampered about the store.

“REmarkable!” squawked Reba.

Hyacinth stood on his hind legs and looked out to see what was happening.



The two canaries, Duke and Duchess, heard something going on and began to sing.

“Out! Out!” squawked Reba. Reba had learned to shout “Out! Out!” to Miss Peasley when she wanted to come out of her cage.

“Out! Out!” screamed Reba again.

This time Snick jumped from the counter and began to wiggle the latch on Reba’s cage. He wiggled it and wiggled it. Suddenly the door was open and Reba was out! She perched on a shelf and watched Snick.

Hyacinth, the skunk, pushed his nose farther through the bars of his cage. Something unusual was certainly happening.

“Out! Out!” squawked Reba from her perch on the shelf.

A new notion made Snick reach under the cover of the canaries' cage. This time it didn't take him long to unlatch the door. Duke and Duchess flew out at once, perched on a chair, and began to sing. Then Snick let more birds out of their cages.

The hair along Hyacinth's back began to stand up. Even Snick knew what hair standing up on a skunk's back might mean. So he unlatched Hyacinth's cage, and out scampered the skunk.

The birds were all over the store. They found the bird seed and bird biscuit that Miss Peasley kept in open boxes among her supplies. Soon bird seed was scattered all over the floor.

Reba perched near the goldfish and watched the fish moving in the water.

Hyacinth was as curious as a cat. He poked his nose into everything. He found a bag of dog biscuits. Soon there were dog biscuits scattered all over the floor, too. He tasted one, but he didn't like it, so he went on poking into other things.

Snick found a bunch of fresh carrots and ate one. Then he took some to his cage. He poked a carrot into Reba's cage, one into the cage for Duke and Duchess, and some into the other bird cages. He had one left then, so he dropped it into the goldfish bowl.

By this time the birds were full of bird seed and tired of flying around. They flew to the perches in their cages. Snick carefully latched the doors after them.

By this time Hyacinth had poked into something that happened to be his own cage, so he went inside. Snick shut his door and latched it.

Reba got tired of watching the goldfish and flew back to her cage. Then Snick had no one to play with. He climbed into his own cage and latched the door behind him. Once more everything was quiet in the pet shop.



At exactly eight o'clock Tuesday morning, Miss Peasley unlocked the door of the pet shop.

"Good morning, my pets," she called as she took off her hat and coat.

"Good morning," squawked the parrot.

Then Miss Peasley noticed the large amount of bird seed and dog biscuits that had been scattered all over the shop.

"Goodness me! I don't remember spilling even the least amount of bird seed or dog biscuits!" she said. "I must be getting forgetful. Well, no matter how they got there, I'll have to get the broom and sweep them up."

As soon as the sweeping was done, she began feeding the animals. She looked for the carrots for Snick.



“Now where do you suppose I put them?” she asked herself when she didn’t find them in the usual place.

She hunted and hunted for them.

When she let Snick out of his cage for the day, she discovered one of the carrots in his cage. “How queer!” she exclaimed.

“REmarkable!” squawked the parrot.

Then Miss Peasley discovered the carrot that Snick had poked into the parrot’s cage. She uncovered the canaries and found another carrot there. There were more carrots in the other cages.

Miss Peasley was amazed. “This is very strange!” she exclaimed.

“Very interesting!” squawked Reba from her perch.

“Yes! It certainly is!” answered Miss Peasley. “Interesting and amazing!”

Just then a customer came in to buy some goldfish. Miss Peasley slipped the long-handled goldfish catcher into the bowl and tried to catch a special fish which he had asked for. She brought up a carrot!



“Now that’s an idea!” said the customer.
“Do goldfish do well on carrots?”

Miss Peasley was more amazed than ever, but she decided to make a joke of it. “Very well, indeed,” she said. “I guess that’s what makes their hair so long.”

As the customer went out and the bell tinkled, Reba squawked, “REmarkable!”

“Yes, it certainly is remarkable,” agreed Miss Peasley. “It’s really amazing.”

“Carrots certainly don’t fly around on wings,” she said to herself. “And I don’t remember putting them there. I wouldn’t put them in those places, anyway.”

All day Miss Peasley wondered about the carrots as she went about her work. That evening, just as she was ready to close, the bell on the door tinkled and Tandy Kipp entered the shop.

Tandy Kipp was eight years old. He liked animals even better than he liked kites or airplanes. He knew Miss Peasley didn't want him in the shop, but he liked pets so well that he came to the pet store almost every afternoon anyway.

"May I come in, please?" he asked in a very small voice.

"You're already in, aren't you?" replied Miss Peasley in a rather cross voice.

"Yes, ma'am," said Tandy.

Tandy always brought two or three peanuts for Snick, but he never fed them to the monkey. He'd hide them in a pocket or in his hat and make Snick hunt for them. Today Snick sniffed around and then poked into Tandy's cap and found the peanuts there.



Tandy stayed until Miss Peasley was ready to put Snick into his cage. Then he knew it was time to go.

“REmarkable!” called Reba as Tandy slipped out and the bell tinkled.

Miss Peasley put on her hat and coat. “Everything is in order,” she said. “And I know exactly where the carrots and the dog biscuits are tonight.”

The bell tinkled again, and Miss Peasley turned the key in the lock.

Outside the shop, Tandy Kipp stood peeking through the window at the pets.

“You still here?” Miss Peasley asked.

“Yes, ma’am,” Tandy said in his rather small voice.

“Well, there’s nothing more to see. You had better go on home,” said Miss Peasley. She didn’t wait to see whether Tandy went away, for she wanted to get home herself.

Tandy was just turning to go when he saw something that made his eyes almost pop out of his head. Snick had begun working out his notion again.

“Will you look at that!” Tandy said right out loud. “What a monkey!”

Just then the village policeman came along Main Street.

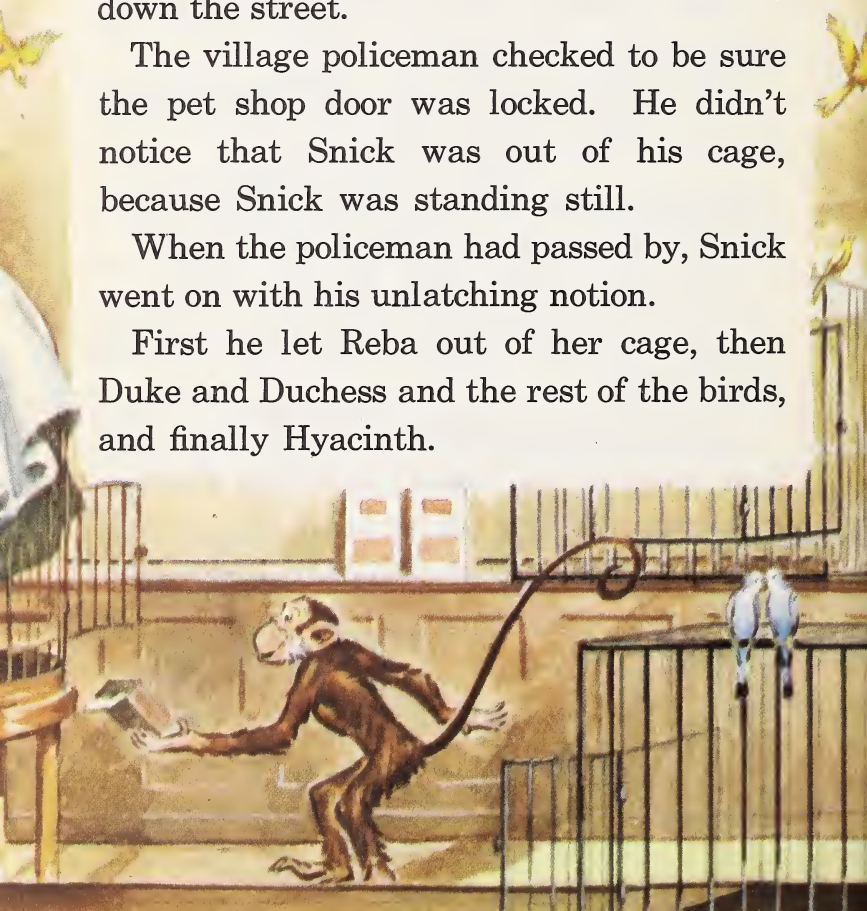
“Hello there, young man!” he said. “Better be on your way home. It will soon be dark.”

“Yes, sir,” said Tandy. He started slowly down the street.

The village policeman checked to be sure the pet shop door was locked. He didn’t notice that Snick was out of his cage, because Snick was standing still.

When the policeman had passed by, Snick went on with his unlatching notion.

First he let Reba out of her cage, then Duke and Duchess and the rest of the birds, and finally Hyacinth.



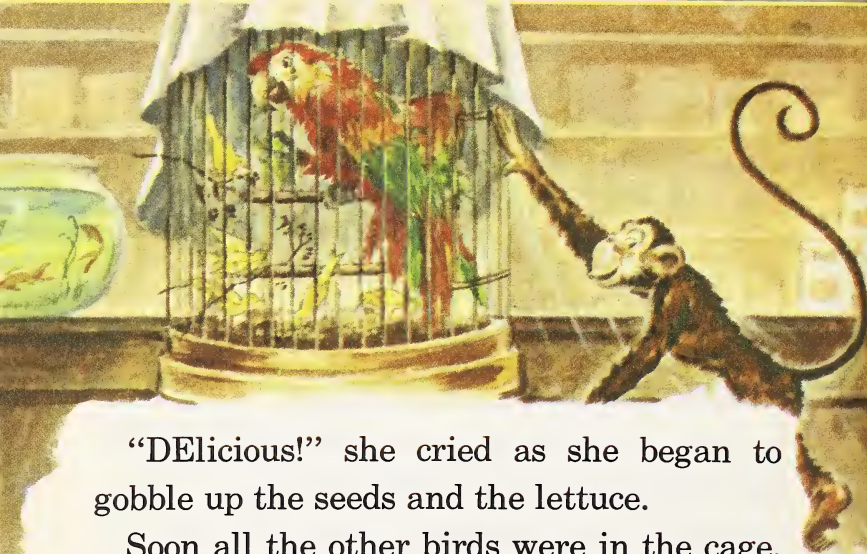
The canaries flew about the shop and perched here and there and sang. Reba perched near the goldfish bowl. The skunk poked into everything, but he finally slipped into the shop window and watched the people passing on the street.

Snick had still another notion. Quick as a wink he scampered up onto the counter and gathered up a handful of lettuce. Then he poked pieces of lettuce between the bars of Reba's cage.

Next he found two boxes of bird seed and emptied the whole amount into the cage. Then he found some dried branches that were full of seeds. He poked them between the bars so that they hung down into the cage.

Finally he climbed into the cage and shook the door with all his might. Reba, the parrot, heard and saw him. She flew in to see what he was doing.





“DELicious!” she cried as she began to gobble up the seeds and the lettuce.

Soon all the other birds were in the cage. While they were gobbling up the delicious food, Snick slipped out as quick as a wink and latched the door.

“REmarkable!” squawked Reba.

Before long, Hyacinth grew tired of watching the people passing by, so he went to his cage. Snick latched the door. Then Snick slipped into his own cage, latched the door, and went to sleep.

All the pets slept well, even though they had gobbled an extra amount of food.

Wednesday morning at exactly eight o'clock, Miss Peasley put the key into the lock and opened the door of the pet shop.

“Good morning, my pets!” she called.

“REmarkable!” squawked Reba.

Miss Peasley was amazed at what she saw.

“My goodness!” she screamed. “Just look at my birds!”

“Very interesting!” said Reba.

“Interesting, indeed!” exclaimed Miss Peasley, greatly puzzled.

By the time she had put the birds back into their own cages, she was so upset that she had to sit down in her favorite chair to rock and calm herself.

“Maybe Tandy Kipp did it,” she said. “But I don’t see how he could do it without my seeing him. *I am* getting forgetful.”

Still puzzled, Miss Peasley got up and began her sweeping for the day.

“No use crying over spilled pets!” she said as she swept the floor.

That morning she had less than the usual amount of business. “I haven’t sold enough to pay for feed for my birds,” she said to herself at noon. “I’ll have to get more business or close my shop.”

Just after noon Miss Peasley received a box of small animals called skinks. Skinks look like lizards because they are lizards. She made a sign which read:

SKINKS FOR SALE
ONLY TWENTY-FIVE CENTS EACH

Tandy Kipp came in after school and saw the skinks. He took twenty-five cents out of his pocket and put it on the counter.

"I'd like to buy a skink," he said.

Miss Peasley had not sold even one skink, but she made no reply to what Tandy said.

"Young man!" she cried. "Do you know what happened to my birds last night?"

"No, ma'am," whispered the frightened Tandy, and he picked up his money and ran out the door without waiting for a lizard.

"I think I'll ask the village policeman to watch that boy," Miss Peasley said.

Before she went home that evening, she looked about carefully several times to see whether everything was all right. Then she closed the shop, leaving the box of lizards in the window beside the sign.

That night, Snick took a notion to get into the window and let the skinks out of their box. Then, quick as a wink, he scampered back into his own cage, banged the door shut, and latched it.

Tandy happened to be peeking through the window when Snick opened the box. He laughed as he saw the skinks popping out of the box like popcorn out of an open popper.

Tandy was still peeking when he heard someone say, "Miss Peasley's pet shop is a favorite place of yours, isn't it, young fellow?" It was the village policeman.

"Yes, sir," Tandy replied.



“Well, Tandy, suppose you check the door for me to see whether it’s locked,” said the policeman. “Then I’ll walk down the street with you.”

Tandy tried the door, and the two went down the street together.

After Wednesday night, Thursday morning came as usual, and so did Miss Peasley. She opened the door and immediately noticed the empty box where the skinks had been.

“Goodness me!” she cried. “I know I closed that box tight last night!”

She didn’t have to hunt for the skinks. They were scampering and dashing all over the shop. But before she could catch them all, customers began to come in.



Miss Peasley had more customers than usual that day.

As each customer came in, she'd give the warning: "Be careful not to step on a skink!" And just about that time a lizard would dash across the floor and scoot between the customer's feet.

If the customer was a lady, she would scream and climb up onto the nearest chair or the counter. Once a lady screamed and ran out the door just as the policeman was going by. Of course he dashed right in to see what was the matter.



“What’s the trouble in here?” he asked.

“Skinks! There are skinks all over the place!” declared an angry customer.

The policeman had begun to be amazed by things that went on in the pet shop, but he got down on his hands and knees and helped Miss Peasley catch the rest of the skinks.

“You should keep these lizards under lock and key so they can’t escape,” said the policeman, when the last skink was caught. “They’re likely to drive customers crazy.”

“I shut up the lizards in their box before I went home last night,” declared Miss Peasley.

“The chances are that you forgot to,” said the policeman.



"Oh, no, I didn't," said Miss Peasley. "I think Tandy Kipp is to blame for all this mischief, don't you?"

"No, indeed, I do not," the policeman said. "That's a crazy notion. He likes animals."

"Well, I don't like him," declared Miss Peasley. "He annoys me. He comes in here and feeds Snick peanuts when I'd rather he wouldn't. Children annoy me anyway. I'd rather they stayed off my property."

"Your business might be better if every child in the village weren't afraid to come on your property," the policeman said as he started away. "It might pay you to be friendly with children. Every child likes pets."

"I've a notion to stay here all night and watch," thought Miss Peasley, as the policeman left. "No, that would be a crazy thing to do. I'll go home early and come back after a little while. Perhaps I'll find out how my skinks escaped."



Miss Peasley had to sweep and get the shop ready for the night. But she hurried and left earlier than usual.

Tandy Kipp got to the shop a few minutes after Miss Peasley had left. When he peeked in the window, he saw that Snick had begun his mischief again.

Snick had just finished letting out all the animals, and Tandy was laughing merrily, when Miss Peasley returned.

“What are you doing here? Don’t you know the shop’s closed?” she asked.

“Yes, ma’am,” said Tandy, but he couldn’t stop laughing.

“What’s so funny?” she asked. She was annoyed. “Come in here with me.”

While Miss Peasley had been talking with Tandy, she hadn’t noticed that anything was wrong inside the shop. But during that time every pet had scampered into the nearest hiding place.

However, as soon as she entered the shop, she noticed the empty cages. “My pets are gone!” she screamed. “I’ve been robbed!”

She turned and faced Tandy.

“Now what do you know about this, young man?” she cried. “I can’t believe that you would really steal them. Would you?”

“No, ma’am,” Tandy said.

“Well, you come with me,” she said. “Maybe you’ll tell the policeman where my lost pets are. I don’t like a thief!”

Miss Peasley dashed out of the door in a rage, leading Tandy by the hand. Down Main Street they went and into the village police station, all out of breath.

“What’s up now? Where’s the fire?” asked the policeman.



"I've been robbed!" Miss Peasley declared. "Someone has stolen my pets, and I found this young man peeking into my shop."

"Calm yourself, Miss Peasley," said the policeman. "Let's not accuse Tandy of stealing until we have the facts. Tandy, have you been in the pet shop today?"

"No, sir," replied Tandy.

"Well, let's all go down to the shop and see what's up," suggested the policeman.

Soon they were back at the shop.

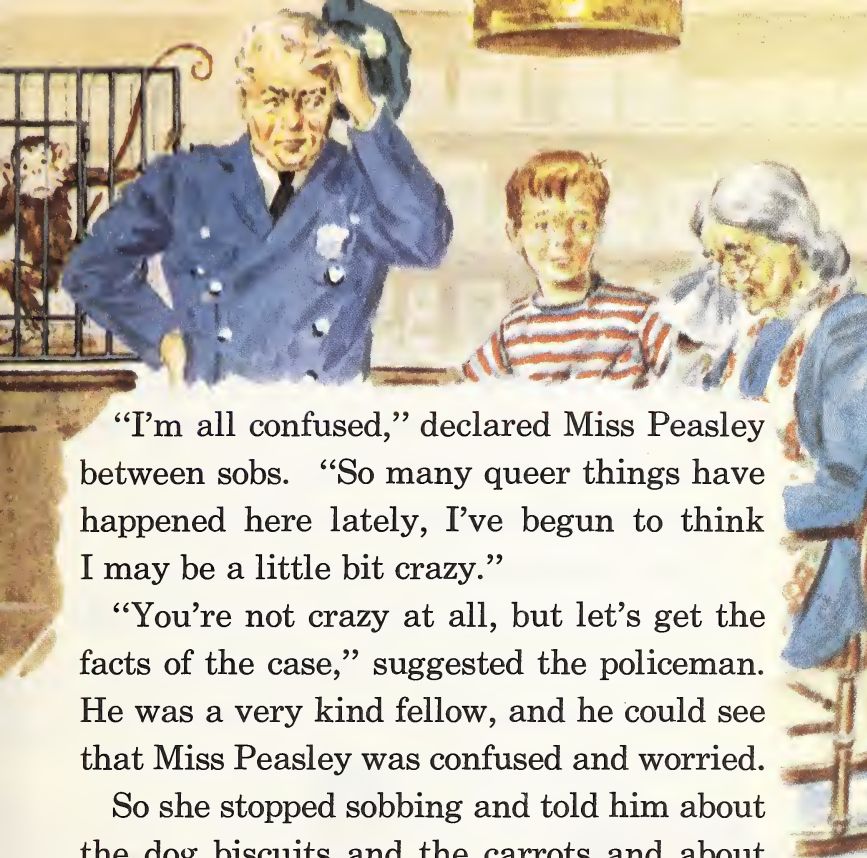
As they entered, Miss Peasley began to explain, "You see! The cages are all em —" She stopped in the middle of a word, for every animal was back in its own cage.

"REmarkable!" squawked Reba.

"I thought you said you'd been robbed," said the policeman.

Miss Peasley was so confused and worried that she sat down in her favorite chair and began to weep.

"Come, come, Miss Peasley! There's nothing to cry about," said the policeman. "You haven't been robbed."



"I'm all confused," declared Miss Peasley between sobs. "So many queer things have happened here lately, I've begun to think I may be a little bit crazy."

"You're not crazy at all, but let's get the facts of the case," suggested the policeman. He was a very kind fellow, and he could see that Miss Peasley was confused and worried.

So she stopped sobbing and told him about the dog biscuits and the carrots and about finding all the birds in one cage eating lettuce and seeds. He remembered chasing the skinks that had escaped. And now she thought she had been robbed. The story did sound a little crazy.

Miss Peasley began to sob again. Even Tandy Kipp felt sorry for her.

"The fact is — I need somebody to help me," sobbed Miss Peasley.

"I'd suggest that you allow Tandy and me to solve this puzzle," said the policeman. He winked at Tandy, and Tandy winked back.

"I will," Miss Peasley agreed. "I confess it is too hard for me to solve."

The policeman went through the shop, looking into every single cage.

"This is an interesting case," he said.

"Very interesting!" squawked Reba.

"Stop your squawking!" scolded Miss Peasley. The policeman looked surprised.

"Oh, not you!" she said. "I was talking to Reba, the parrot."



The policeman smiled at that. Then he said seriously, "It may take a day or two to get the facts in this case. Just allow us a little time. We'll find out who is causing all the mischief."

"I suggest that you close the shop for tonight. Tandy and I will leave now, but we will return tomorrow and dig out more facts in the case."

Miss Peasley had never before felt so confused. One minute she was glad to have help in solving her pet shop mystery. The next minute she felt annoyed because she had allowed Tandy to help with the case.

She was very sure that he was the cause of all the mischief. Then a minute later she felt sad because she was afraid that she was crazy. So at times she sat and smiled, then she looked annoyed, and then she sobbed.

"This is foolish!" she finally said to herself. "I'm going to close the shop and go home before I get more confused."

After the door was shut, the whole pet shop became as quiet as the goldfish in their bowl. Snick sat without a single notion popping into his head. Reba and the other birds didn't sing even one song. The skinks slipped quietly around each other and over each other in their box.

Soon all the pets closed their eyes and went to sleep — every single one — except the goldfish. They couldn't close their eyes.

On Friday morning when Miss Peasley arrived at her shop and opened the door, there was no sign of any mischief.

"REmarkable!" said Reba.

"It is indeed!" answered Miss Peasley.

When the policeman and Tandy came in, she was quite cheerful.

"Well, have you figured out the cause of all the mischief?" she asked.

"I haven't," said the policeman. "But my partner thinks he has solved the case. He wants to do an experiment here to show the cause of the mischief. Suppose we allow him to do his experiment."

“DElicious!” squawked Reba.

“All right, young man!” said Miss Peasley.

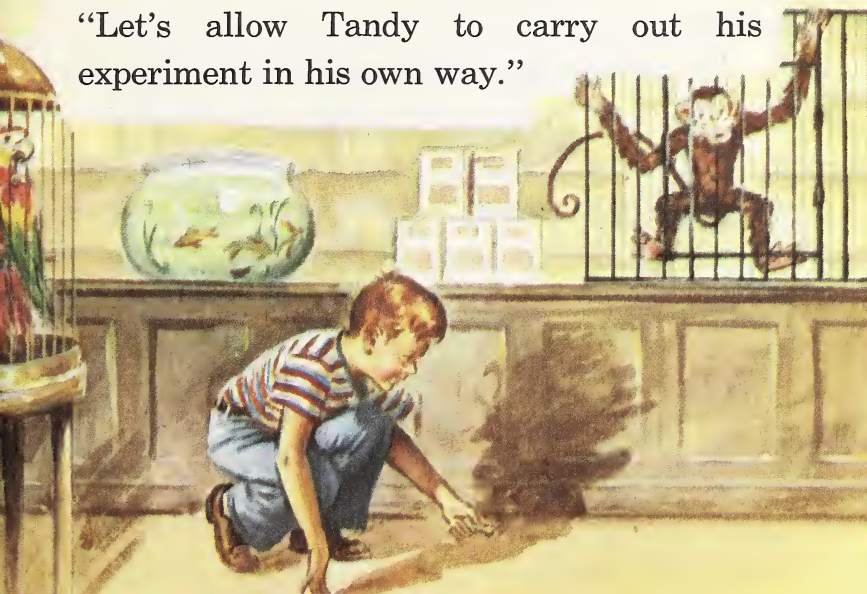
“Go ahead with the experiment.”

Tandy opened a small brown paper bag. Snick immediately stuck his nose between the bars of his cage and sniffed the air.

Miss Peasley watched as Tandy poked two peanuts into Reba’s cage and two more into the canaries’ cage.

Miss Peasley laughed as Snick sniffed harder and began to shake the bars of his cage. “The birds won’t eat those,” she said. “It’s Snick who likes them.”

“Don’t get impatient!” said the policeman. “Let’s allow Tandy to carry out his experiment in his own way.”



Then Tandy laid a large fresh peanut on the floor in front of Snick's cage but just out of Snick's reach. "Now we'll pretend to go away," he said. "We'll go outside and watch from the street."

They went out and closed the door. Then they all peeked through the window.

Miss Peasley was beginning to be a little annoyed at all the bother. Then things began to happen.

"Goodness me!" whispered Miss Peasley.

Snick stuck his paws between the bars and unlatched his own door. Then he sat up and ate the peanut that Tandy had placed on the floor.

"Goodness me!" repeated Miss Peasley.

"Watch now!" said Tandy, all excited.

Snick sniffed around for the peanuts which Tandy had placed in the cages. One by one he opened the cages and ate the peanuts.



Miss Peasley couldn't help laughing. She realized that the big mystery was solved.

"Just call us any time you want a case solved," said the policeman proudly. "We know how to find the facts. We never fail."

"Well, I certainly thank you for solving this mystery," said Miss Peasley. "Now I feel sure that I am neither crazy nor forgetful. I never would have guessed that Snick was the cause of all the mischief."

"I think Tandy should have a reward for solving the mystery, don't you?" asked the policeman.

"Yes, I do, indeed!" replied Miss Peasley.

"How about giving him one of your pets?" he suggested. "What about the monkey?"

"Well, I suppose I could," said Miss Peasley, looking a bit unhappy.



"Tomorrow is Saturday, Tandy," went on the policeman. "Suppose you think about it tonight. Then come back tomorrow, and tell Miss Peasley what reward you'd like."

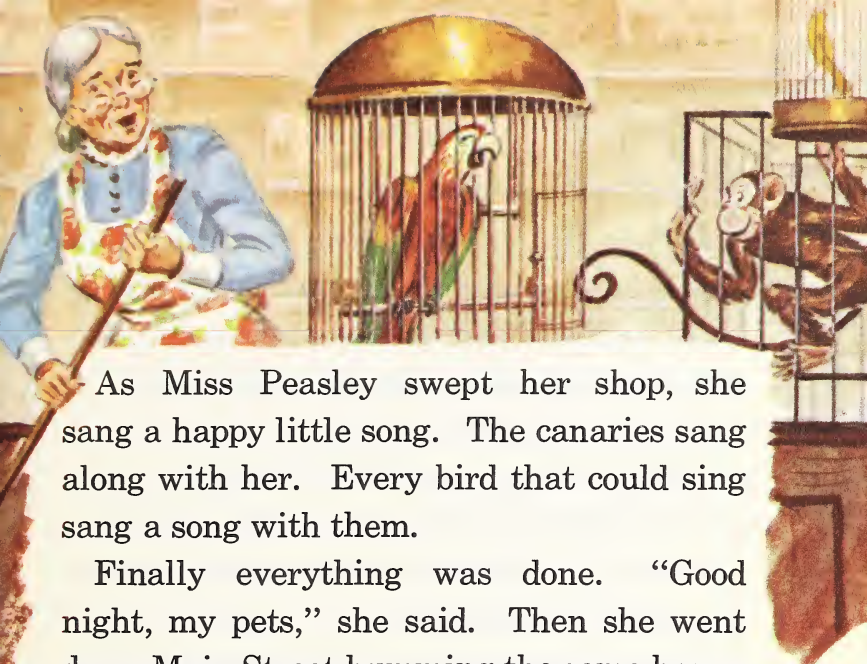
"All right, sir," said Tandy.

They left Miss Peasley looking at Snick, who sat in the window looking a little silly. All at once she saw Hyacinth climbing along the top edge of the goldfish bowl. She dashed into the shop.

"Hyacinth! Don't jump into that fish bowl!" she cried. "If you really want fish to eat, I'll get you some. And there's plenty of water elsewhere, if you want a drink."

Soon she had all the animals and birds back in their cages. "I'll get a lock and key for your cage, Snick," she said. "You almost made a monkey out of me! But it's too late to buy a lock and key tonight, so I'll put this chair in front of your cage. That will stop your monkeyshines!"



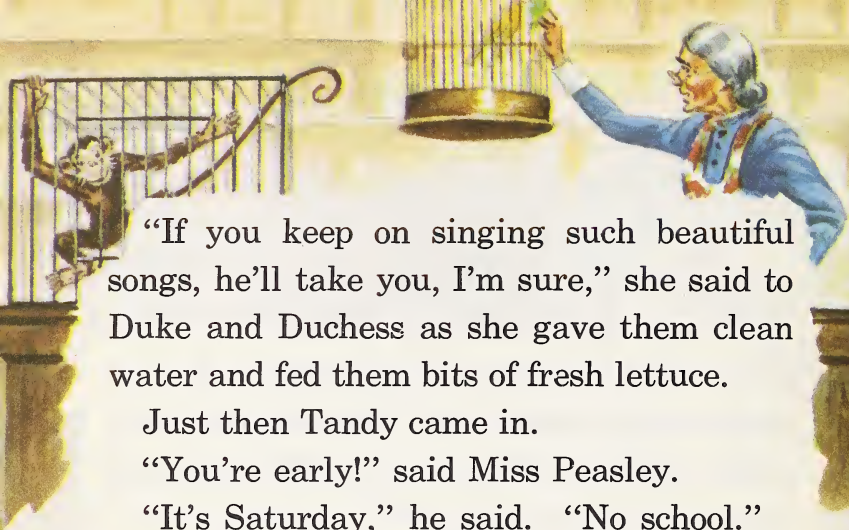


As Miss Peasley swept her shop, she sang a happy little song. The canaries sang along with her. Every bird that could sing sang a song with them.

Finally everything was done. "Good night, my pets," she said. Then she went down Main Street humming the same happy tune.

The next morning Miss Peasley came to her shop long before eight o'clock. She felt so happy she was willing to give Tandy one of her pets as a reward for solving the mystery. She was glad that there would be no more mischief.

"Hyacinth, I might give you to Tandy," she said to the skunk. Then she paused. "No, his mother would never let you come within a mile of her house."



"If you keep on singing such beautiful songs, he'll take you, I'm sure," she said to Duke and Duchess as she gave them clean water and fed them bits of fresh lettuce.

Just then Tandy came in.

"You're early!" said Miss Peasley.

"It's Saturday," he said. "No school."

"Have you decided which pet you want as a reward?" she asked.

"Yes, ma'am," Tandy answered, smiling.

"Well, which one?" she asked anxiously. She hoped he would not choose one of her favorite pets. She never sold any of them even when she had good chances.

"I don't really want a single one of them to take home," said Tandy. "I think I'd rather come here and see them all. And may I invite some of my friends?"

"Come whenever you like," said Miss Peasley happily. "Invite all your friends. Perhaps they will make business pick up."

Then she had an idea. "I'll tell you what! Suppose you come and help me sweep up every night after school. And you could help me wait on customers on Saturday. Would you like that?"

"I certainly would!" Tandy said.

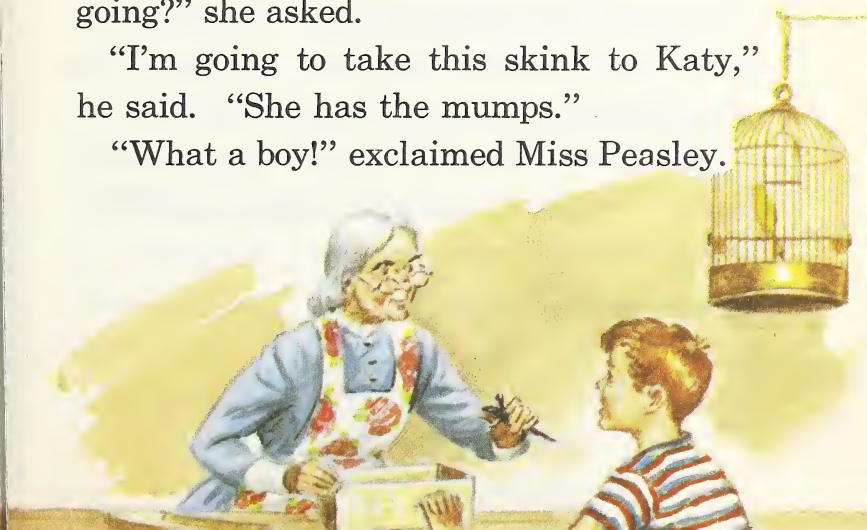
"Well, then, it's settled," she said. "We can decide on your pay later, and as just a small reward, I'd like you to have the last of my twenty-five cent skinks. This one was not sold."

She caught the little lizard and put it into a box for Tandy. He thanked her for it. All at once, he was in a very big hurry.

"What's the hurry? Where are you going?" she asked.

"I'm going to take this skink to Katy," he said. "She has the mumps."

"What a boy!" exclaimed Miss Peasley.



From the time that Tandy Kipp began to help Miss Peasley, business was good at the pet shop. Every day after school and on Saturdays the shop was filled with groups of noisy children who came to see the pets.

Almost every child in the village came at one time or another to buy food or other supplies. Some children bought pets, too.

Tandy kept things so neat and tidy that Miss Peasley was never annoyed by the dirt the children tracked in. She rather enjoyed the noise they made. As a matter of fact, she liked having them in her shop.

One day when the policeman came into the shop, Miss Peasley said to him, "You were right about the children. They do like pets, and I think they like me too. It's remarkable how much I've sold lately."

And even though the bell on the door hadn't tinkled at all, Reba suddenly squawked, "REmarkable!"





Just Between Commas

To read and think over

You often see this little mark , in sentences. It is a comma. Commas are put into sentences to help you understand what the sentences mean.

Read Sentences 1 and 2 below and think how to answer the questions that follow.

1. Dr. Lord took Janet to the zoo.
2. Dr. Lord took Janet, his little daughter, to the zoo.

What group of words in Sentence 2 is not in Sentence 1? What does that group of words explain? What mark comes before it? What mark comes after it? What words are between the two commas in Sentence 2?

Talking together

Help your class answer the questions that were asked about the numbered sentences.

Then help your class decide whether this statement is true:

In Sentence 2 the words *his little daughter* come between commas and just after *Janet*. They explain who Janet is.

If you are asked to do so, read aloud Sentences 3 and 4 below. Then help your class answer the questions that follow.

3. Janet asked Sally Ann, her cousin, to go too.

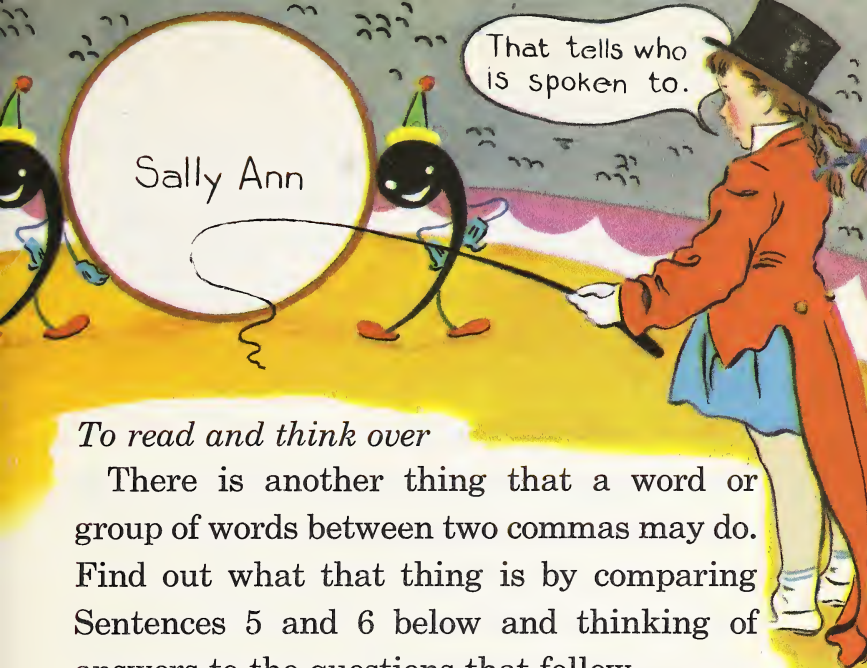
4. Mrs. Fox, Sally Ann's mother, said that Sally Ann might go.

What words are between commas in Sentence 3? What does that group of words explain?

What words are between commas in Sentence 4? What do those words explain?

Is this statement true?

Sometimes a group of words which is between commas explains a word or group of words which comes just before it.



To read and think over

There is another thing that a word or group of words between two commas may do. Find out what that thing is by comparing Sentences 5 and 6 below and thinking of answers to the questions that follow.

5. "Will you go to the zoo with me if Daddy can take us?" Janet asked.

6. "Will you go to the zoo with me, Sally Ann, if Daddy can take us?" Janet asked.

In Sentence 5 are there any words that tell you to whom Janet is speaking? Are there any words in Sentence 6 that tell you to whom Janet is speaking? What are those words? What mark comes before and after them? What do the words between commas in Sentence 6 tell you?

Talking together

Help your class answer the questions that were asked about Sentences 5 and 6.

Then help your class decide whether these two statements are true:

In Sentence 6 the words *Sally Ann* between the two commas let you know that Sally Ann is being spoken to.

Sometimes a word or group of words which comes between commas makes it easy for you to know who or what is being spoken to.

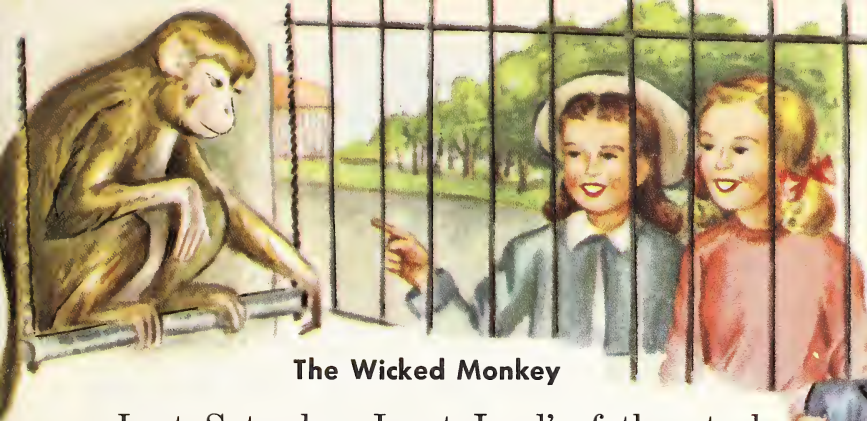
Help your class decide on a good answer to this question: What are two reasons for placing a word or group of words between two commas in a sentence?

Working together

Read the story that follows. Then help your class decide what is done by each group of words that is between two commas. Use these questions to help you.

Does it explain a word or group of words that comes just before it?

Does it name someone or something that is being spoken to?



The Wicked Monkey

Last Saturday Janet Lord's father took her and Sally Ann, her cousin, to the zoo. The first place they went was to the monkey house. The girls had heard about and especially wanted to see the old monkey, Slick Nick, who played tricks on people.

For a while the girls watched the old monkey as he sat half-asleep on a swing. He didn't appear to be the least bit mean or tricky or wicked. Then the girls pushed through the crowd to get nearer to Slick Nick's cage.

"Watch out, you girls, or you will get into trouble!" Dr. Lord called to them. "Don't get too near Slick Nick's cage. I think I can see a wicked look in his eye."

"He won't bother us," said Janet.

Just then Sally Ann, Janet's cousin, turned her back to the cage in which Slick Nick was swinging so quietly. Sally Ann found out that Janet was mistaken.

Suddenly Slick Nick jumped down and reached one arm out through the bars of his cage. Like a flash he pulled away the coat which Sally Ann was carrying and climbed back up on his swing.

Sally Ann felt foolish and angry. "Come back here!" she called to the monkey. "Give me my coat, you wicked thief, or I'll have the police lock you up."

But Slick Nick, the wicked old fellow, wasn't scared at all by Sally Ann's scolding. He just sat grinning and going through every pocket of that coat. He kept on having his fun until Mr. Jackson, the monkeys' keeper, came up and made him hand over the stolen goods.





MR. BUMBLE: Mr. Bee, why is your dog watching me while I eat?

MR. BEE: Maybe it's because you're eating out of his dish, Mr. Bumble.



MR. BEE: What are you doing with a pencil and paper, Mr. Bumble?

MR. BUMBLE: I'm writing to my brother.

MR. BEE: You're joking, Mr. Bumble! You don't know how to write.

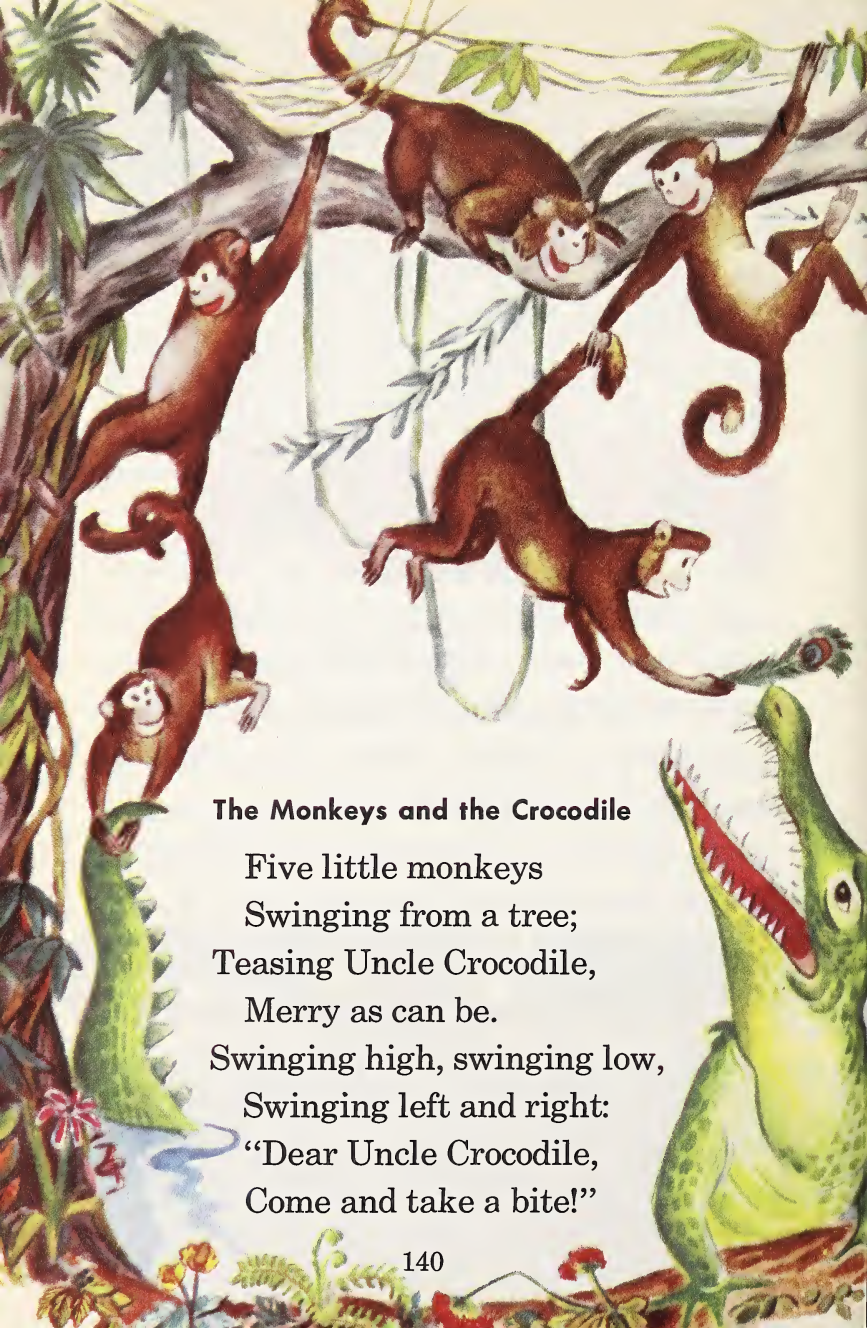
MR. BUMBLE: That makes no difference. My brother doesn't know how to read!



DING: I fell over fifty feet this morning.

DONG: You did! Weren't you hurt?

DING: No, I was just walking through a crowded trolley car.



The Monkeys and the Crocodile

Five little monkeys
Swinging from a tree;
Teasing Uncle Crocodile,
Merry as can be.
Swinging high, swinging low,
Swinging left and right:
“Dear Uncle Crocodile,
Come and take a bite!”

Five little monkeys
Swinging in the air;
Heads up, tails up,
Little do they care.
Swinging up, swinging down,
Swinging far and near:
“Poor Uncle Crocodile,
Aren’t you hungry, dear?”

Four little monkeys
Sitting in the tree;
Heads down, tails down,
Dreary as can be.
Weeping loud, weeping low,
Crying to each other:
“Wicked Uncle Crocodile,
To gobble up our brother!”



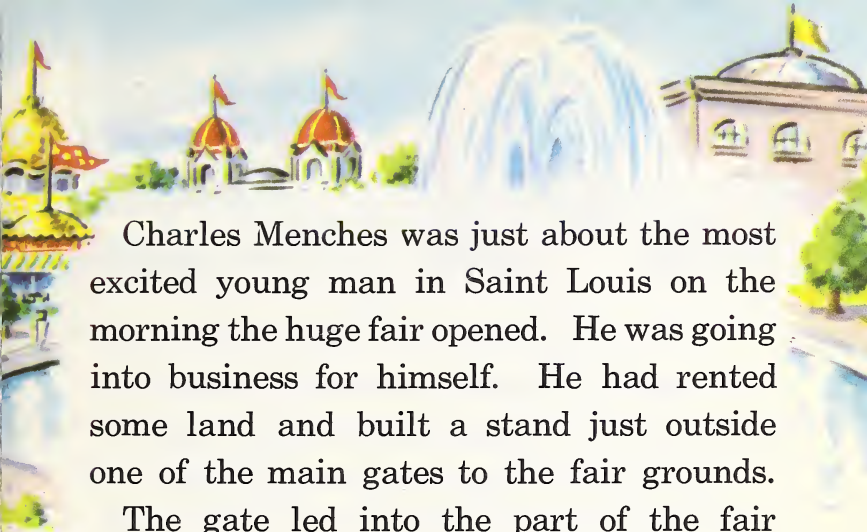


It's Ideas That Count

The opening day of the great fair in the city of Saint Louis had come at last. Everyone was excited.

For more than a year, hundreds of men had been at work preparing the grounds for the fair. They had laid out streets and roads, built huge buildings, and set out trees and flowers to make the grounds beautiful.

It was not a fair for just one city, one state, or one country. It was a world's fair. People from all parts of the world were in Saint Louis to see the sights on that opening day. More and more people would come in the weeks and months to follow.



Charles Menches was just about the most excited young man in Saint Louis on the morning the huge fair opened. He was going into business for himself. He had rented some land and built a stand just outside one of the main gates to the fair grounds.

The gate led into the part of the fair grounds where the amusements were. Charles knew that everyone would go to the amusement park. He planned to sell ice-cream sandwiches to the great crowds of people who would go back and forth through that gate.

He had prepared hundreds of wafers and many different kinds of ice cream. Anyone who ordered an ice-cream sandwich would get two of the wafers with whatever kind of ice cream he wanted between them.

Charles was prepared to handle a huge amount of business, and he hoped to get it all summer long.



On the morning that the Saint Louis fair opened, Charles was at his stand early. He had come to finish painting his sign:

MENCHES' ICE-CREAM SANDWICHES

Just as he gave the sign a last touch, he heard a voice behind him calling his name. He turned around and found Herr Huber looking at him.

Herr Huber was a huge man. Charles had met him when Herr Huber had been a waiter in an inn near Saint Louis.

Now he had a job as waiter in one of the eating places in Pleasure Land. Pleasure Land was the name of that part of the fair grounds where the amusements and eating places were.

"Doing well — yes?" Herr Huber inquired, in his queer way of asking a question.

Charles nodded. "I hope so," he said.

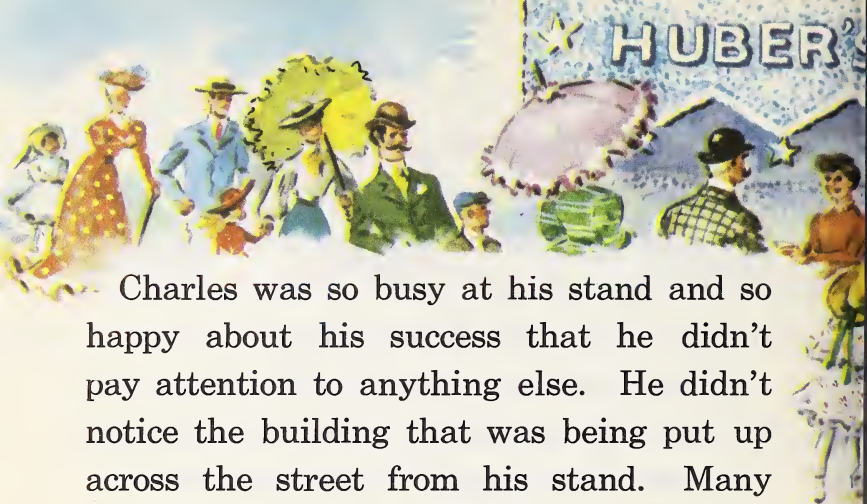
"A fine spot you have here," Herr Huber went on. "Right outside the main gate to Pleasure Land. Just the right place for a big ice-cream business in hot weather. All the people will stop here and buy ice cream before they go into Pleasure Land.

"You're a smart man, Mr. Menches. It's smart to have a stand here. In business it's ideas that count. Remember that."

Charles was pleased by Herr Huber's praise. He smiled as the huge man went back through the gate on his way to his job in Pleasure Land.

As the next few days passed, Herr Huber often stopped to inquire how the business was going. He learned that Charles' business was a huge success and that it was getting better every day.

Charles' stand attracted many customers. More and more people stopped to buy ice-cream sandwiches on their way to or from the amusement park. Soon Charles had to call in his younger sister Ann to help him wait on the customers.



Charles was so busy at his stand and so happy about his success that he didn't pay attention to anything else. He didn't notice the building that was being put up across the street from his stand. Many buildings were still going up here and there.

Then one morning Charles suddenly discovered why Herr Huber had been inquiring about his little ice-cream stand. The building across the way had been completed. Along the whole front of it stretched a sign in big glittering letters:

HUBER'S JUMBO ICE-CREAM SANDWICHES

Herr Huber's new building was a palace compared to Charles' little stand. Shiny mirrors, cardboard snow scenes, and glittering silver stars that flashed in the sunlight made the building a showy place. There was no doubt that it would attract many customers.



Charles was alarmed. He knew that he was in danger of losing the customers who had made his business so successful.

All that day Charles and Ann watched sadly as long lines of customers stood before the shining mirrors of Huber's glittering palace. Hundreds were waiting to buy jumbo ice-cream sandwiches.

Now and then a customer would get tired of waiting and would come over and buy a sandwich from Charles or Ann. But there were too few customers to make the business pay. It was very discouraging. Menches' little stand was no longer a success.

The next day was even worse. Neither Charles nor Ann could think of any way to attract more customers. When closing time came, Charles locked up his stand and put the key into his pocket. Then, slowly and sadly, he and Ann started home.

For a long time they walked without saying a word. At last Charles spoke.

"I guess I had better give up the whole business," he said. "I can't compete with Huber's jumbo sandwiches."

"Oh, no, Charles," said Ann. "Not yet. I know I'm younger than you, and I don't know much about business, but I think you're giving up too soon. Herr Huber has had his stand only two days. Let's try it at least one more day."

MENCHES' ICE-CREAM SANDWICHES



"It's no use, Ann," Charles replied sadly. "I can't compete with both a glittering palace and jumbo-sized sandwiches."

"Please, Charles," begged Ann. "I know we can't have a palace with mirrors and stars and jumbo sandwiches, but there must be some way to attract customers to our stand. Just try it one day more. Maybe one of us will have an idea."

"All right," promised Charles, but there was no hope in his voice. He was completely discouraged. Success was gone and would never return, he felt sure.

At six o'clock the next afternoon Charles was so discouraged that he was prepared to lock up his stand and give up. Business had been much worse than it had been on either of the days before.

As he was wiping off the counter, he found a bunch of violets that someone had left there on his way home from the amusement park. They were very tired-looking flowers, but he thought they might cheer Ann up a bit.

He handed them to Ann, who was holding an uneaten ice-cream sandwich in one hand.

“Mmmm!” she said as she buried her nose in the blossoms. “How good they smell! But the poor things need water.”

Hardly realizing what she was doing, she put her sandwich down at the edge of the counter and lifted off the top wafer. The ice cream had melted a little and softened the wafer enough for Ann to roll it into a neat cone. She poured a little water into the cone and put the violets into it.

By this time Ann’s ice cream had melted a lot and was dripping from the counter onto her dress.





Charles hurriedly slipped the dripping ice cream off the bottom wafer of her sandwich and onto a dish. He made a cone from the bottom wafer. Then he put the melting ice cream into it and handed it to Ann. He had made *the first ice-cream cone!*

Ann held the rolled-up wafer in her hand and began to eat the ice cream. Suddenly she stopped and looked at Charles. Her eyes flashed. "Charles," she said, "this is it! This will attract customers."

Charles looked puzzled. Then his eyes, too, began to flash. "Ann, you're right!" he exclaimed. "This *is* it! We'll make ice-cream cones instead of ice-cream sandwiches!"

Charles and Ann began to sell ice-cream cones the very next day. Everyone praised the cones. Ice cream melted in them as it had in the sandwiches, but it didn't drip from the cones the way it had dripped from the sandwiches.

Soon Herr Huber noticed that the long lines of people that used to be in front of his shining mirrors and glittering stars were now in front of Menches' stand. He also noticed the new sign that Charles had put above his stand:

MENCHES' ICE-CREAM CONES

Herr Huber made his way over to have a look at Menches' busy stand. Charles and Ann were handing out cones as fast as they could fill them. Herr Huber was amazed, and his face showed it.

"Doing well, — yes?" he inquired.

"Very well, thank you," Charles replied. "We remembered what you said — 'It's ideas that count.' "





Another Lesson on Commas

To read and think over

In an earlier lesson you learned two reasons for paying attention to a group of words between commas. One reason is that it may explain a word or a group of words that comes just before it. The other reason is that it may name someone or something being spoken to.

In this lesson you will learn another thing that words between commas may be doing.

Below is a list of things that Sally went to buy at the grocery store or in the market. The different things that are named in a list are often called items. How many items are in Sally's list?

unsalted butter
jumbo grapefruit
peach ice cream
spiced candy

Sentence 1 below shows one way of putting the list of four items into a sentence. Read the sentence. Then think how to answer the questions that follow it.

1. Sally went to buy unsalted butter and jumbo grapefruit and peach ice cream and spiced candy.

What word is used between the first item and the second item? Between the second item and the third item?

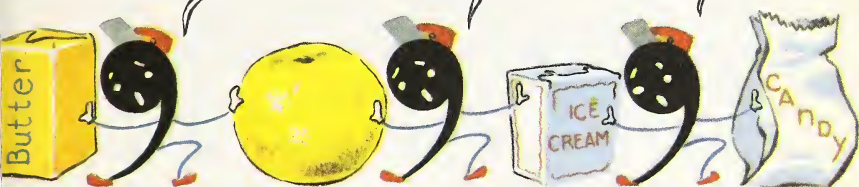
Sentence 2 below shows a better way of putting the list of four items into a sentence. Read the sentence. Then think how to answer the questions that follow it.

2. Sally went to buy unsalted butter, jumbo grapefruit, peach ice cream, and spiced candy.

What mark is used between the first item and the second item? Between the second item and the third item? What two groups of words are between two commas?

In Sentence 2 a comma is used instead of *and* between the first and second items and between the second and third items.

We keep them apart.



In Sentence 2 a comma follows each item in the list except the last one. Because of that, each of the middle items in the list stands between two commas. The item *jumbo grapefruit* is between two commas. So is the item *peach ice cream*.

There is a list of items in sentence number 3 below. The commas are missing. Can you figure out just what items the writer means to have in the list?

3. The girls promised to bring gingerbread cookies lettuce sandwiches chicken pie meat cakes and hot cocoa.

The same sentence is given on the next page. The commas have been put in. Do they make it easier for you to know just what the items are? How?

4. The girls promised to bring gingerbread cookies, lettuce sandwiches, chicken pie, meat cakes, and hot cocoa.

Be sure to pay attention to the commas when you read a list of items in a sentence. Those commas will help you keep the items apart and understand what each item in the list is.

Talking together

Help your class answer the questions that you were asked about the four numbered sentences.

You have learned that a group of words between two commas in a sentence may be there for any one of three reasons. What are those three reasons?

There are many other reasons for using commas, as you will learn in later years.

Working together

Read silently the story that follows. Then help your class decide what each group of words between two commas does.



A Wise Mother

Blue Bell, our old cat, is the smartest pet on the farm. My youngest sister, Betty May, had often said so. Then Blue Bell proved it early last spring.

Blue Bell had three young kittens. Betty May and I named them Blackbird, Sister Sally, and Granny. We kept the dog from bothering the kittens, helped Blue Bell keep them clean, and fed them fresh milk every day for two weeks.

But very soon both our cows, Daisy and Cinder, stopped giving milk. In a day or two Blue Bell and the kittens left.

We saw none of them again until a month later. Then each day Blue Bell would appear at the barn early in the morning, at noon, and in the evening. But she never had the kittens with her.

Blue Bell was there the morning that Daddy began to milk Daisy and Cinder again. She didn't stay long. An hour later she came back with three half-grown cats. I knew them immediately.

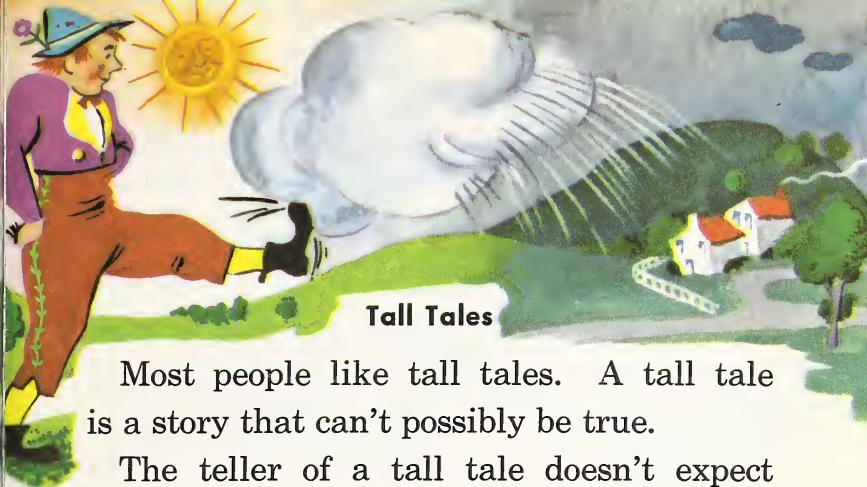
"Come here, Betty May, come here!" I called. "Here are Blackbird, Sister Sally, and Granny!"

Betty May opened the back door quickly, ran down the steps, and picked up the three kittens. She was just as surprised as I.

"Hello, lost kittens, hello!" she cried. "Where have you been all this time?"

Of course the cats told her nothing. Later we found out that Blue Bell had taken her kittens to the next farm. There she had left them until she found out that Daisy and Cinder were giving milk again.





Tall Tales

Most people like tall tales. A tall tale is a story that can't possibly be true.

The teller of a tall tale doesn't expect anyone to believe his story, but he tells the impossible events just as if they had really happened. Often a good tall tale makes impossible things seem almost real.

Many tall tales are about big, strong men. You might make up one if you tried.

For example, you might tell about a man who used a telephone pole for a walking stick or one who built a fire under a lake to cook the fish in it for his breakfast.

You might think up a tale about a man who kicked a rain cloud out of his way. You could say that the rain storm that followed made the water in the lakes and rivers so deep that all the fish drowned.

You might tell about a boy who could throw a ball so that it would turn corners. You could have him play catch with himself! He would throw a ball so that it would go all around his house. Then he would turn around and catch the ball as it came back.

Sometimes tall tales are about animals. Can you imagine a mule with such a sweet voice that he travelled all over Canada singing for people? Or a goat that was so strong he butted a huge mountain into a lake to make an easy path to follow?

Perhaps you could make up a tall tale about a giraffe with such a long neck that a hiccup takes twelve hours to go through it. You might tell of a kangaroo that jumps across rivers, an ostrich that kicks a football out of sight, or a lamb that rides a bicycle when he goes wolf hunting.

If you like tall tales, you'll like this next story about a very remarkable dog.



The Fast Sooner Hound



One day a railroad man was walking down the street with his hands in the pockets of his overalls. A long-legged, lop-eared hound trotted along at his heels.

After a while the man stopped in front of a small frame building near the railroad tracks. Over the front door was a sign that said: ROADMASTER.

The railroad man turned and looked down at the dog. "Well, Sooner," he said, "here's the place."

It seemed that the lop-eared hound paid no attention to the man's words, but when the man entered the Roadmaster's office, Sooner followed him inside.



The man in the office looked up from his desk. "Hello! What can I do for you?" he inquired.

"I'm a fireman — a boomer," replied the railroad man. "I'm looking for a job."

"So you're a boomer!" said the Roadmaster. "Well, I know what you mean. You go from one railroad to another and never stay long with any one of them."

"That's right," the man in overalls said proudly. "Last year I shovelled coal on freight trains on the Canadian National Railroad. Before that I worked for the Canadian Pacific line. Before that it was the Northern Alberta. I travel light, I travel far, and I don't let any grass grow under my feet."

The Roadmaster took time to look the Boomer over. Then he said, "We might be able to use you on one of our local freight trains. Can you find some place to leave that dog?"

"Leave my dog!" cried the Boomer. "Listen here, Mr. Roadmaster, that hound Sooner always goes along with me."

"Oh, he does, does he?" said the Roadmaster. "And why do you call him Sooner?"

"Because he'd sooner run than eat — that's why," replied the Boomer. "And because he'd sooner be with me than in any other place in the world."

"I raised him from a pup. He's never passed a night, a day, or even an hour very far away from me. It would break his heart if I left him behind."

"I'd like to give you a job," said the Roadmaster, "but I don't see how I can if you insist on keeping that lop-eared hound with you. It's against the rules of this railroad to allow a passenger to ride with the fireman and the engineer."



"But, Mr. Road ——," the Boomer began.

"Now wait a minute," the Roadmaster broke in to say. "You're going to tell me that a dog shouldn't be called a passenger. You're wrong about that. I know the rules.

"Nobody is allowed to ride in the cab of an engine except the fireman and the engineer. It makes no difference whether it's man or beast. And here's something else. No passenger is allowed to ride in the caboose of a freight train, either.

"Rule Number One on this railroad is that neither man nor beast may ride in the caboose of a train or in the engine cab with the engineer and the fireman. That rule has never been broken yet, and I refuse to break it for anyone as long as I'm roadmaster."

The Roadmaster gave the Boomer time to think that over. Then he said, "It looks as though that Sooner is going to spoil your chances for a job on this railroad."

"Sooner won't make any trouble for you," said the Boomer. "You won't have to break any rules for him. He won't be any bother at all."

"When I'm the fireman on a freight train and dogs aren't allowed in the cab or the caboose, Sooner just lopes along near the train. Often he chases around in the fields to pass the time away."

"Sometimes he scares up a rabbit — just to play with when things aren't exciting enough for him, but he never makes any trouble. He never rides with the crew in the cab or in the caboose if it's against the rules of the railroad."

The Roadmaster leaned back and laughed. "Do you mean to tell me that that lop-eared, hungry-looking hound can outrun a freight train?" he asked. "You couldn't make me believe that."

“He can do it without half trying,” said the Boomer proudly. “Give him a chance and he’ll prove it. As a matter of fact, he’ll probably find it tiresome to travel as slow as a freight train. But he’ll put up with anything to stay close to me. He loves me that much.”

“Oh, come now,” said the Roadmaster. “The dog hasn’t been born that can outrun one of our freight trains. We run the fastest freights in Canada. They are faster than anything on the Canadian National or Canadian Pacific. That’s why we get so much business.”

After a pause, he added, “I’m sorry that I can’t give you a job. You look like a man who could keep an engine boiler popping off steam even going up a steep hill. But I don’t see how you could handle your job and keep that hound with you.”

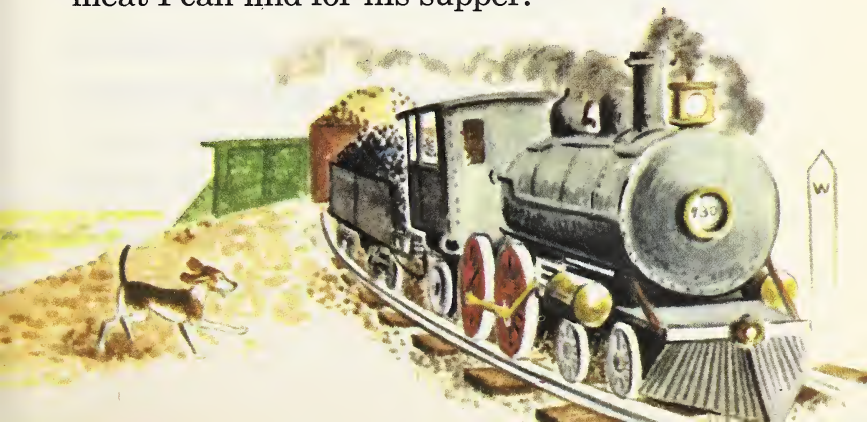


“Listen, Mr. Roadmaster,” said the Boomer. “Give me a chance and I’ll prove that my Sooner can run circles around your freight trains. What’s more, he’ll be as fresh as a daisy when the run is over.”

Then he added, “Of course Sooner will want to trot around the station forty or fifty times before we start — just to get warmed up, you know.”

“I’ll take you up on that, Boomer,” said the Roadmaster. “You can have the job. But remember, you must not break Rule One. No passenger, man or beast, can ride in the cab with the crew or in the caboose.

“And what’s more,” he added, “if your dog can outrun one of the freight trains on this railroad, I’ll buy five pounds of the best steer meat I can find for his supper.”





The boomer fireman climbed up beside the engineer in the cab of a freight train and began to shovel coal into the firebox. Soon the boiler was blowing off steam.

The train pulled out of the station and began to pick up speed. For a little while Sooner just loped along beside the train, but in a short time he had left it far behind.

Now and again he could be seen loafing along up ahead, waiting for the train to catch up. Sometimes he would pop out of sight in the bushes while he was hunting for rabbits, but he always appeared again up ahead of the train.

Once when the Boomer looked out of the cab, he noticed a queer look on the hound's face. The Engineer noticed it too.



“What’s the matter with your Sooner?” the Engineer asked. “He looks worried.”

“Yes, he does,” admitted the Boomer. “I have an idea he’s worried about the sixteen hour rule. You know that rule says a train crew can’t work more than sixteen hours without a rest.

“He’s afraid we’ll have to stop in the middle of a field and wait for a fresh crew to take our place. He must think we’re running too slow.”

“Slow!” exclaimed the Engineer. “This engine is doing all it can. The boiler’s got enough steam up to pop wide open.”

The Boomer threw in another shovelful of coal. “Well, we’re not making enough speed for my Sooner,” he said.



The freight train made its round trip. The Sooner led all the way and trotted into the Roadmaster's office when the train was still a mile from the station.

That made the Roadmaster angry. He didn't mind having to buy five pounds of the best steer meat in the market for Sooner. What he did mind was the way people would poke fun at a freight train that couldn't outrun a lop-eared hound. They would say that the train was no good.

The Roadmaster couldn't stand talk like that. He wanted his freight trains to be known as the fastest in Canada

"Look here, Boomer," the Roadmaster said as the fireman climbed down from the cab.

“Sooner will get his five pounds of steer meat. I certainly admit he outran the freight train. But now I’m going to put you on a local passenger train. What do you think about that?”

“Suits me,” replied the Boomer. “We take what jobs we can get, and we stick together, don’t we, Sooner?”

The lop-eared hound looked up at the Boomer and wagged his tail.

“Do you really think that hound can keep up with our local passenger train?” asked the Roadmaster.

“It will be easy for him,” replied the Boomer. “He’ll do it and not half try.”

“That Sooner is fast, but I don’t believe he can beat our passenger train,” said the Roadmaster. “But it will be an interesting experiment.

“What’s more, I’ll promise you this: If your Sooner can beat our local passenger train, there’ll be ten pounds of the best steer meat in the market waiting for you two.”

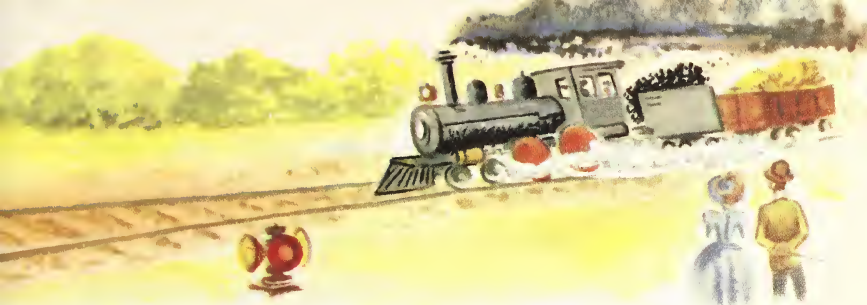
So another race was on.



For a little while after the local pulled out of the station, the Sooner just loped along beside it. As the train put on more speed, it looked as though it might get ahead. Then the Sooner put on some speed too.

But just as the race was getting exciting, the train had to stop to pick up some passengers. After that the Sooner was always ahead. At times he had to run around in the fields to keep from getting too far ahead. He arrived at the station more than ten minutes ahead of the train.

Losing that race ruffled the Roadmaster's feelings, but he didn't complain. He thought it was his fault. He should have chosen a train that didn't make so many stops.



The next day the Roadmaster put the Boomer in the cab of a fast passenger train that didn't make any stops until it got to the end of the line. So the third race was on.

By that time the people who lived along the railroad tracks were getting interested in the races. They came out to see the hound that could outrun trains and come back to the station as fresh as a daisy.

They had begun to think that something was wrong with the trains. But of course the trains were all right. Every train was running right on time and was making all the speed it was expected to make.

The trouble was that Sooner was so fast that he made the trains seem slow. But the people didn't know that. They felt sure that the trains were slowing down. They began to talk about not riding on them any more.

People along the line talked even more after Sooner won the race with the fast passenger train.

“Why,” they said, “passengers might just as well walk. They could get where they’re going just as fast. And if you shipped a calf to market on one of those freight trains, he’d be a full-grown steer before he got even halfway there.”

That kind of talk made the Roadmaster mad enough to bite the heads off ten-penny nails. That old Sooner hound was spoiling everything. People wouldn’t ride on the passenger trains, and they were shipping their freight by truck.

The Roadmaster knew that he could fire the Boomer. He could tell him to take his hound and go somewhere else, but he hated to admit that the Sooner was just too fast for his trains.

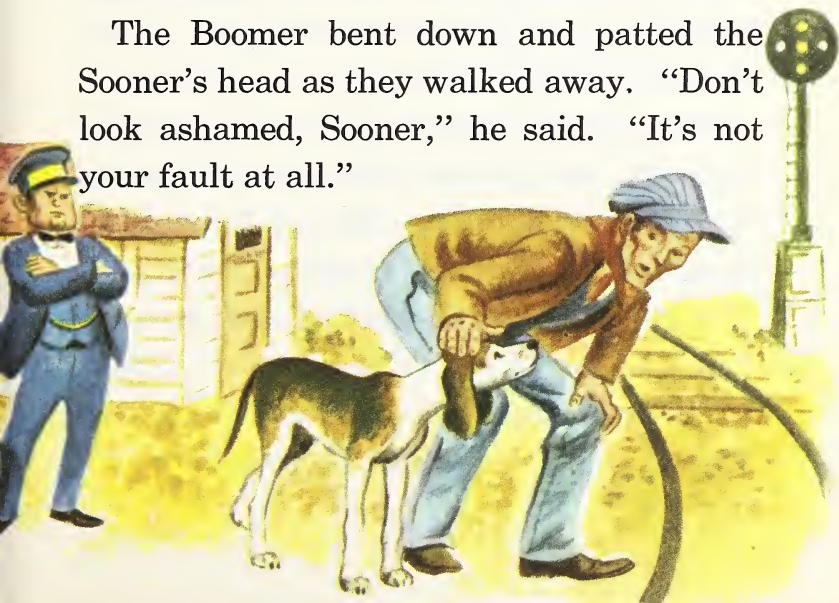
“Boomer,” the Roadmaster said one day, “that old lop-eared beast of yours is spoiling this railroad’s business. He makes our trains look like snails.”

"It's not the Sooner's fault," said the Boomer. "My dog isn't trying to make your trains look like snails. He just wants to stay near me, that's all. Do away with that foolish Rule Number One, and let him ride in the cab with me. Then people won't say your trains look like snails."

"Not on your life," the Roadmaster declared. "Nobody on earth can make me change the oldest rule on the road on account of an old lop-eared hound."

"O. K.," said the Boomer, as he turned to walk away. "Do as you please. It's your railroad. It makes no difference to me."

The Boomer bent down and patted the Sooner's head as they walked away. "Don't look ashamed, Sooner," he said. "It's not your fault at all."



Before the Boomer and the hound were out of sight, the Roadmaster had a new idea.

"I'll fix that Sooner," he said, snapping his fingers. "I'll teach him a lesson. Tomorrow I'll put the Boomer in the cab of our Cannon Ball Express. That's the fastest train on wheels. If the fastest dog on four legs can beat the fastest thing on wheels, I want to see him do it."

The Roadmaster called the Boomer back and told him the new plan.

"You're going to a lot of trouble," the Boomer said. "There's no need for all this bother on our account. Just let my dog ride in the cab with me. That's all he wants, and that's all I want."

But the Roadmaster would change neither the plan nor the rule. He was so sure that the Cannon Ball Express would beat the Sooner that he grinned from ear to ear.

"I aim to see this race myself," he said. "I'll ride in the cab of the engine. If that Sooner hound beats the Cannon Ball Express, I'll give him my seat and walk back."



The next morning word got around fast that the Sooner was going to compete with the Cannon Ball Express. Everybody along the railroad line wanted to see that race.

Farmers unhitched their horses from the plows and hitched them up to wagons. Then they took their families to the railroad crossings to watch the Sooner race the fastest train on wheels. Schools were let out so that the children could go along.

Judges, mayors, police chiefs, and other important people closed their offices and went to see the race. Near the tracks hurdy-gurdy men played their music, and other men sold balloons and popcorn. It was like a circus day or a state fair.

Just before the race was to start, the Roadmaster climbed into the engine cab of the Cannon Ball Express. He wanted to be sure that the Boomer kept plenty of steam up in the boiler and that the Engineer kept the engine running at top speed.

There was another reason why the Roadmaster rode in the cab. He wanted to be where he could laugh at the Boomer when the Cannon Ball Express ran away from the old lop-eared Sooner.

The Roadmaster had ordered the track to be cleared for a hundred miles. All the switches were fixed so that no other train could get onto the main track while the Cannon Ball Express was making its run.

Bang! went the starting gun, and the Express and the Sooner started off together. The hound loped off so fast that he looked like a brown streak.



The Express picked up speed fast as it left the station. Soon it was going so fast that it took three men to see it go by a crossing.

As it streaked by, one man had to shout, "Here she comes!", another, "Here she is!", and the third, "There she goes!"

That Cannon Ball Express went so fast that most people never saw it at all. They just heard a roar and saw a streak that left a cloud of steam, cinders, and smoke behind it. The rails rang for half an hour after the wheels had passed over them.

On the Express, the Boomer didn't do any talking. He knew his hound, and he didn't mind having him compete in a good race. He smiled as he shovelled coal at top speed.

The train roared on. The Boomer shovelled so much coal that he wore the shovel almost down to the handle.





Once the Roadmaster stuck his head out of the cab window. WHOOSH! Off went his hat — and he nearly lost his head, too. But he got a look back through the smoke, steam, and cinders. He didn't see any sign of Sooner.

"The Sooner! The Sooner!" he shouted, rubbing the cinders out of his eyes. "He's nowhere in sight! This time we've outrun that old lop-eared hound."

"I can't understand that," shouted the Boomer above the roar of the train. "That Sooner never failed me before. Let me take a look."

He dropped his shovel and poked his head out the window. He looked ahead and he looked behind. He looked far and wide. He had to admit that the Roadmaster was right. The Sooner was nowhere in sight.

As the train roared on, the Roadmaster had a grand time poking fun at the Boomer.

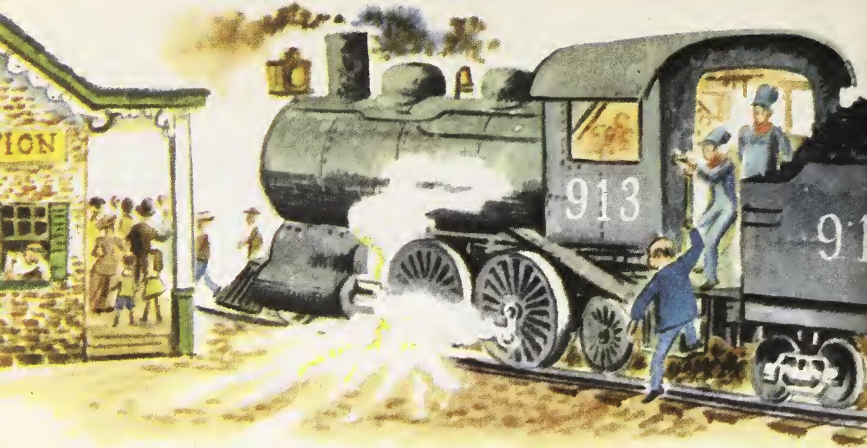
But the Boomer didn't say a word. Every minute or so he took a quick look out through the smoke, steam, and cinders. Surely something was wrong. They were nearing the end of the hundred mile race. Where was Sooner?

Then the station came into sight, and the Cannon Ball Express began to slow down.

The Boomer looked up the track and saw a great crowd of people at the station. He supposed that they were waiting to give a cheer for the Cannon Ball and its crew. But the crowd's eyes weren't on the train. Everyone was watching something else.

"Those people haven't noticed us," said the Roadmaster. "Blow the whistle! Ring the bell!"

The whistling and ringing went on until the train came to a stop. The people paid no attention to the whistle, the bell, or the train. They were looking the other way and laughing.



The Boomer, the Roadmaster, and the Engineer were all puzzled. They climbed down out of the engine cab.

“Well, here we are!” the Roadmaster cried. Still nobody in the crowd paid the least attention to him.

He pushed his way right into the crowd. “What’s going on here?” he inquired a bit crossly. “Didn’t you people come down here to see the Cannon Ball win?”

“Take it away!” a man shouted. “It’s too slow to catch cold. It can’t compete with Sooner. He’s been here ten minutes.”

The Boomer’s heart almost leaped out of him when he heard that news. It seemed too good to be true.

But just then the old lop-eared hound came loping around the corner of the station, chasing a rabbit that he had scared up somewhere.

He had been having so much fun playing with the rabbit and making the people laugh that he had forgotten all about the Cannon Ball Express. He looked as fresh as a daisy.

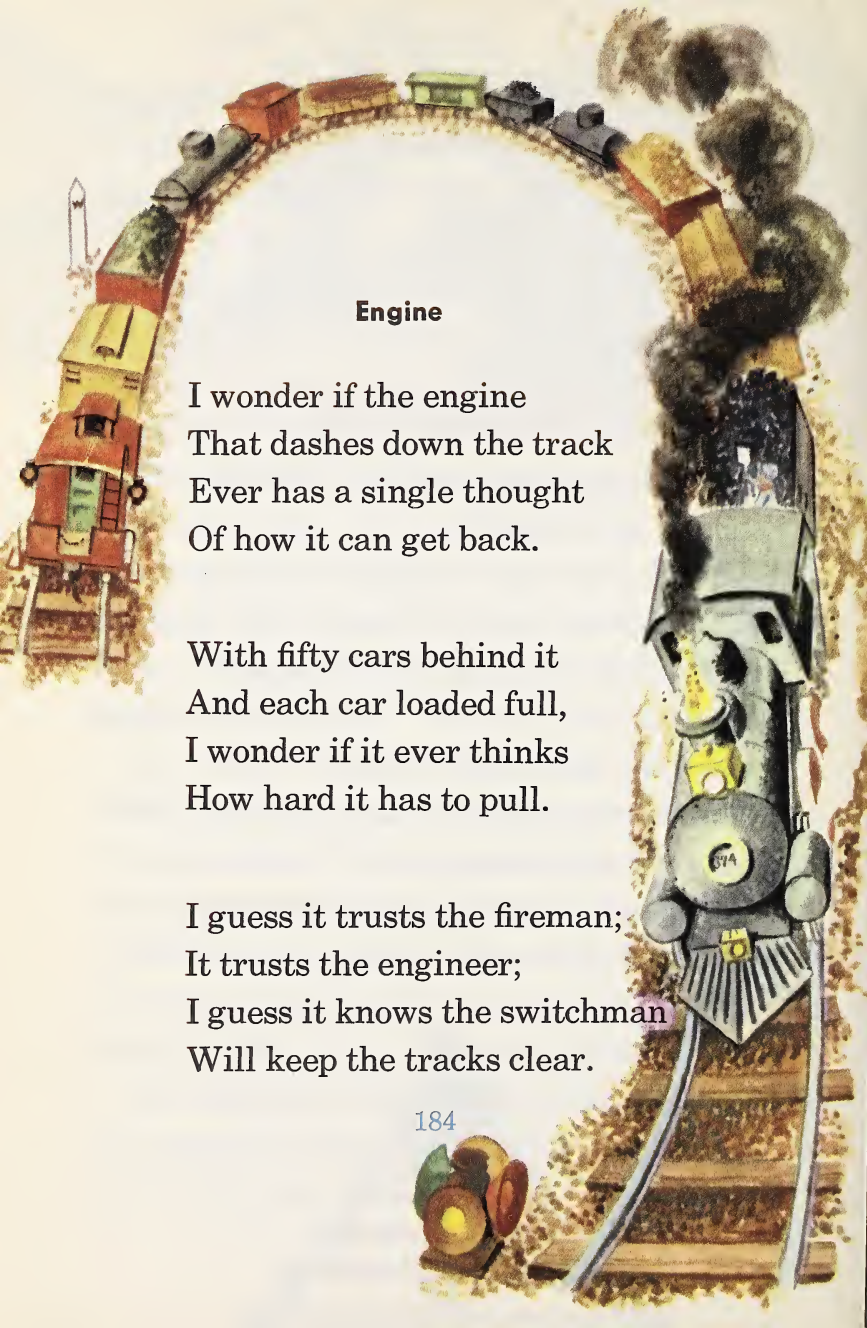
"He's here!" the Boomer shouted. "My Sooner's won again!"

The Roadmaster rubbed his eyes. He didn't believe what he saw. He was so amazed that he could hardly speak. "Put that beast in the cab," he growled. "Put him in the cab and get going."

The Boomer grinned from ear to ear. "But where are *you* going to sit?" he asked.

"I'll walk," barked the Roadmaster as he started down the tracks toward home.



A whimsical illustration of a steam locomotive pulling a long train of colorful cars in a circular path. The locomotive is black with a yellow smokestack and a yellow bell. It is pulling a train of cars in various colors: red, yellow, green, blue, and brown. The train is moving clockwise around a large circular track. The locomotive is at the bottom right, and the train extends to the top left. The background is a light yellowish-brown. The locomotive has the number '574' on its front. The train cars are loaded with various items, including what looks like coal, wood, and other goods. The locomotive is emitting a large plume of black smoke from its smokestack. The train is moving on a track made of wooden planks and gravel. The overall style is that of a children's book illustration.

Engine

I wonder if the engine
That dashes down the track
Ever has a single thought
Of how it can get back.

With fifty cars behind it
And each car loaded full,
I wonder if it ever thinks
How hard it has to pull.

I guess it trusts the fireman;
It trusts the engineer;
I guess it knows the switchman
Will keep the tracks clear.



A Very Fine Morning

One fine morning, the Duke of Grandtower was awakened by the sunlight that filled the bedroom. He threw back the covers, leaped out of bed, and went to the open window.

“Ah, what a beautiful day!” he exclaimed as he raised himself on tiptoe and stretched his arms to catch the bright sunshine and the fresh morning air.

The Duke felt so happy that he sang all the time he was dressing. He hummed a merry tune as he pulled on his stockings. He even tried a dance step as he started to put his favorite tiepin into his tie. That was a mistake.

Dancing is all very well in its place, but it was not very wise for the Duke to dance at just that minute.

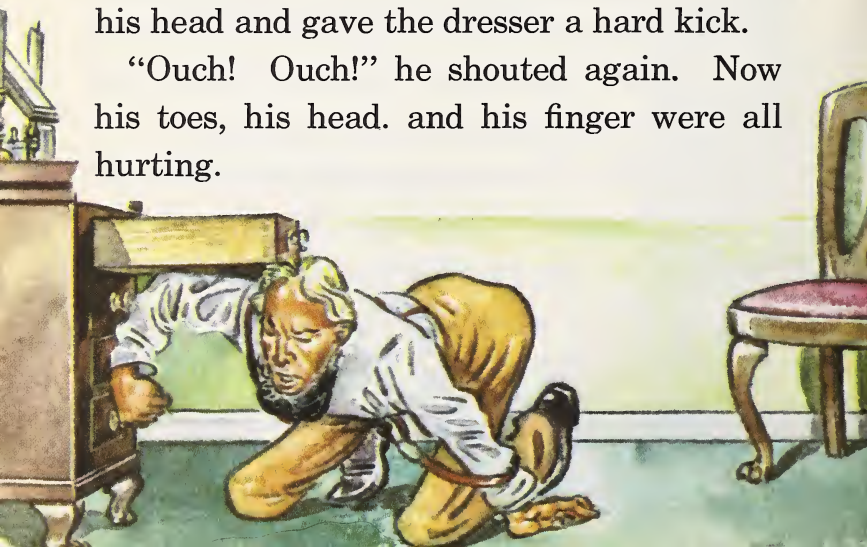
First, he bent the tiepin. That made him cross. When he tried to straighten the pin, he stuck the point into his finger. That made him drop the pin.

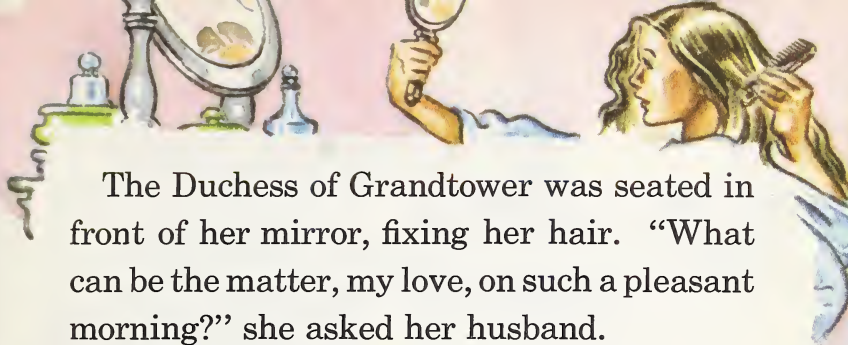
He looked for it on the floor, but he didn't find it. So he got down on his hands and knees and hunted under the dresser. The pin wasn't in sight. Now he was really cross.

As he rose hurriedly from his knees, he banged his head on the corner of a dresser drawer that he had left open.

"Ouch!" he shouted angrily. He rubbed his head and gave the dresser a hard kick.

"Ouch! Ouch!" he shouted again. Now his toes, his head, and his finger were all hurting.





The Duchess of Grandtower was seated in front of her mirror, fixing her hair. "What can be the matter, my love, on such a pleasant morning?" she asked her husband.

The Duke's face was purple with rage.

"What difference does the weather make when I have lost my favorite tiepin!" he exclaimed angrily. "Why can't you help me find it instead of sitting there talking about the weather?"

"I shall be late to breakfast, and everything will be cold. You know how I hate to eat cold toast and cold boiled eggs!"

"You talk as if I were to blame for losing your tiepin!" cried the Duchess. "I will not be snapped at as though I were a servant.

"If you allow yourself to fly into a rage, don't expect me to stay and listen to you. I hope your breakfast will be as cold as a stone!"

With that, she swept out of the room, banging the door in the face of her husband.



The housekeeper was hurrying by on her morning's work.

"A lovely day, your ladyship!" she said, bowing low as she passed the Duchess.

"A lovely day, indeed!" snapped the Duchess crossly. "It is no part of your work to be wasting time looking at the weather!"

The Duchess swept on down the front stairs. The housekeeper went on her way down the back stairs, but her face had turned the same purple color the Duke's face had been.

"The very idea!" she exclaimed under her breath. "Accusing me of wasting my time! Why, I never waste a single minute!"

She rushed into the kitchen and banged the door behind her.

“Isn’t it a grand morning, ma’am?” said the cook, looking up from the bowl of gingerbread batter she was preparing. “It makes one feel good to be alive!”

“You’re not here to have feelings. You’re here to cook the meals!” snapped the housekeeper. “If you’d remember that instead of gazing at the weather, you would get along better.”

“Well I never!” gasped the cook as the housekeeper dashed out the other kitchen door.

The cook was so angry that she scolded the kitchen-girl for five whole minutes. The girl had done nothing more than sing a lively little song over her dishwashing. She was filled with happiness because it was such a fine morning.



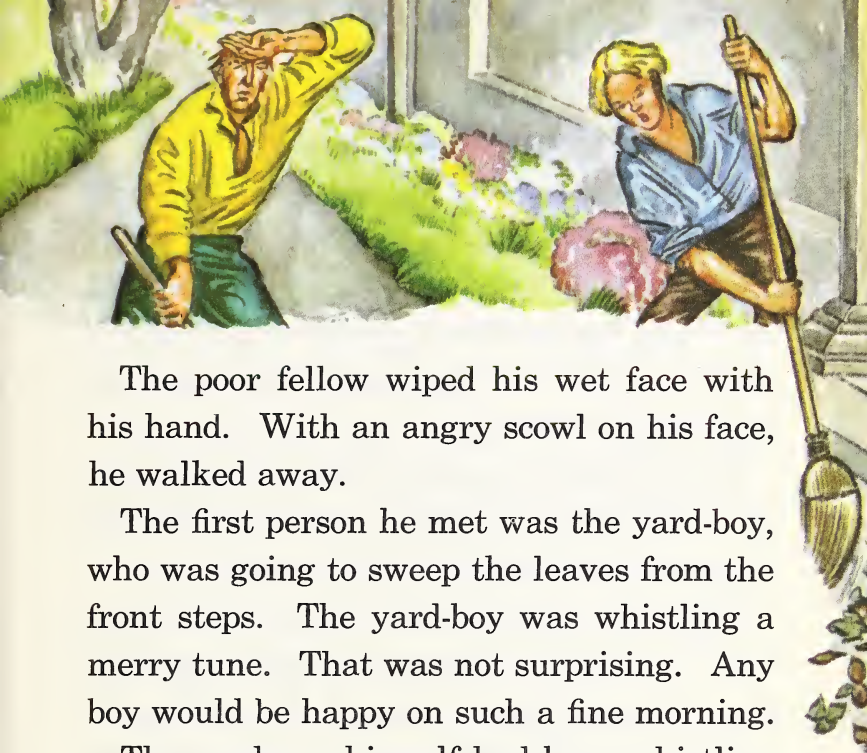
The kitchen-girl returned to her dish-washing, but now there were tears in her eyes, and she felt sulky. She paid so little attention to what she was doing that soon she broke a bowl, and a minute later she knocked the handle off a cup.

Just as she did that, the gardener put his head in through the window. He was in love with the kitchen-girl. Someday he hoped to get up enough courage to ask her to be his wife.

"It's a very nice morning, my dear," he said.

"What do I care about the morning?" she cried. "Go away!" And she hit him across the face with her wet dishcloth.





The poor fellow wiped his wet face with his hand. With an angry scowl on his face, he walked away.

The first person he met was the yard-boy, who was going to sweep the leaves from the front steps. The yard-boy was whistling a merry tune. That was not surprising. Any boy would be happy on such a fine morning.

The gardener himself had been whistling not two minutes before. But he didn't feel like whistling now, nor did he want to listen to anyone else who was merrier than he. So he boxed the ears of the yard-boy and sent him weeping down the driveway.

Soon the yard-boy rubbed the tears from his eyes. There in front of him lay the Duke's favorite cat sunning herself and enjoying the pleasant day.

“Get out of here!” shouted the yard-boy angrily as he threw a stone at the cat.

Now just the very minute before this happened, the Duke had come to the window again to look out. His head no longer hurt where he had banged it on the corner of the drawer. His toe had stopped hurting from kicking the dresser.

He had quite forgotten that he had stuck the tiepin into his finger. And he had found his tiepin and fixed it safely in place.

“What a very fine morning it is, to be sure!” he said, rubbing his hands together in a pleased way. Just as he spoke, he heard an angry shout and saw the yard-boy throw the stone at the cat.





The Duke hurried across the room and rang the bell for the footman.

“Tell the yard-boy to report to me immediately!” he ordered.

The footman said, “Yes, my lord,” and very soon the yard-boy stood trembling before the Duke, his face as white as a sheet.

“What do you mean by throwing a stone at the cat on such a lovely morning?” asked the Duke. “What has she done?”

“She hasn’t done anything, my lord,” replied the yard-boy, feeling very stupid.

“Then why did you throw a stone at her?” asked the Duke. “Come! Answer me that!”

“I had to do something, my lord,” the yard-boy sobbed. “The gardener had just boxed my ears without any reason.”

The Duke rang for the footman again. “Send for the gardener,” he ordered.

“Yes, my lord!” said the footman. Presently the gardener came into the room.

“Why did you strike the yard-boy?” cried the Duke. “Couldn’t you be pleasant on such a lovely morning?”

“I was mad because the kitchen-girl had just hit me across the face with a wet dishcloth,” replied the gardener sulkily. “I didn’t do anything to her. All I did was make a polite remark about the weather.”

“Send for the kitchen-girl!” cried the Duke. “It’s foolish for everyone to be upset like this.”

The kitchen-girl entered the room and stood before the Duke, bobbing up and down as if her knees had springs in them. Between sobs she tried to tell the Duke that it was the cook who was to blame.





When the footman brought in the cook, she declared that it was the housekeeper who had been the first to make the trouble.

“I mean to get to the bottom of this,” said the Duke, very much annoyed. “It’s too bad if we can’t all enjoy a fine morning without this sulking and quarrelling. Bring the housekeeper!”

The housekeeper was no more ready to take the blame than the others had been. “Indeed, my lord, I am not to blame,” she complained. “It was no one else but her ladyship who set us all by the ears.”

“Her ladyship!” cried the Duke. “Is that possible? Tell her I’d like to talk with her at once!”

When the Duchess entered the room, she was amazed to see the large group of people gathered there.

“What is the matter?” she asked.

"Something very serious is the matter," said the Duke, looking straight at the Duchess. "There are six of us here, and this beautiful morning has been spoiled for all of us. It's all your fault. You are to blame, my dear!"

"All my fault, my sweet?" asked the Duchess in great surprise.

"It's you who are to blame, my pet," repeated the Duke impatiently. "Because you got angry and scolded the housekeeper, you spoiled the morning for everyone in the household, even the cat."

"And what made me angry?" asked the Duchess. "It was you, my love. You first scolded someone without any reason except that you had dropped your tiepin."



“What?” roared the Duke.

“Certainly,” said the Duchess. “If you have not enjoyed this morning, you have only yourself to blame.”

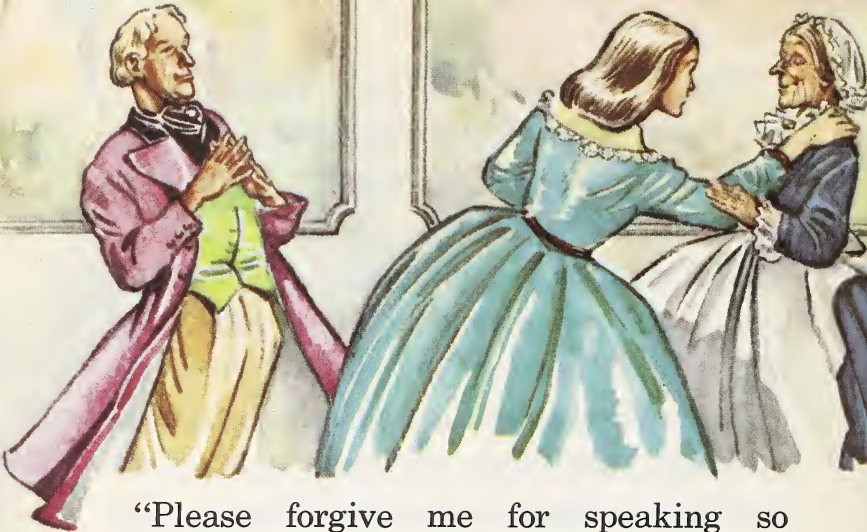
“My goodness!” exclaimed the Duke. He looked so surprised and confused that it was wonderful to see.

The next minute, the Duchess had begun to laugh, for who could help it? The housekeeper smiled behind her hand. The kitchen-girl had to hide her face behind her apron.

The gardener’s face got redder and redder as he tried to keep from grinning. The yard-boy laughed right out loud.

“I? — But — What ——?” said the Duke, feeling very foolish.





“Please forgive me for speaking so unkindly to you, my heart,” he said to the Duchess.

“And I ask your forgiveness,” said the Duchess to the housekeeper.

“And I beg yours,” said the housekeeper to the cook.

“I’m sorry, indeed I am,” said the cook to the kitchen-girl.

“I didn’t mean a word of what I said,” whispered the kitchen-girl to the gardener.

“I didn’t mean any harm,” said the gardener to the yard-boy.

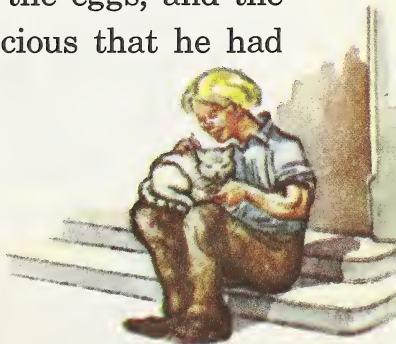
“Where’s the cat?” asked the yard-boy. He ran to the garden to find her.



When the Duke walked to the window to look out again, he had his arm around the Duchess. The first thing he saw was the yard-boy sitting on the front steps scratching the cat behind the ears.

“What a remarkably fine morning it is, to be sure!” cried the Duke. Then he and the Duchess went down to breakfast.

The toast was piping hot, and it seemed to him that the oatmeal, the eggs, and the coffee were the most delicious that he had ever tasted.





The Seven Sticks

There once was a farmer who had lived to a ripe old age. He had always been successful, and his farm was a rich one. He had other property, too, besides his rich farm.

The farmer had seven sons. They were big, strong men, but they had one great fault. They were always quarrelling with one another.

This quarrelling worried the good old man. He felt sure that if they quarrelled while he was alive, they would quarrel over his property when he was gone.

He was wise enough to know that when sons or daughters in a family quarrel over property, strangers often get the property away from them.

One day the good old man called his sons around him. He laid before them seven sticks, which were tied together in a bundle. He said, "I will pay a hundred dollars to the son who can break this bundle of sticks."

Each son took a turn at trying to break the bundle of sticks. Each one struggled with all his might, for each one was eager to win the hundred dollars. But not one of them was strong enough to break the sticks.



Then the old father took the sticks. He said, "My boys, you couldn't break these sticks, and yet nothing is easier to do." So saying, he untied the bundle and took the sticks apart. Then one by one he broke the sticks easily.

"Ah!" said one of his sons. "It is easy enough to do it that way. Anyone could break them one at a time."

The father replied, "As it is with these sticks, so it is with you, my sons. If you remain together and help each other, no harm can come to you. But if you quarrel and let yourselves be pulled apart, it will happen to you as it has to these sticks which fell broken to the ground."





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Whiskers



Tommy Carson had a little dog that he called Whiskers. She was young and plain-looking except for her ears. One of them was black and stood straight up. The other was white and flopped down.

Quite by chance Tommy discovered that he owned a trick dog. One morning as he was rounding the corner of the house, Whiskers was sitting on the sill of an open kitchen window.

Without thinking at all about tricks, Tommy stopped and looked up at Whiskers. Then he held up his arms and called, "Allay-oop!" in his best circus trainer's voice.

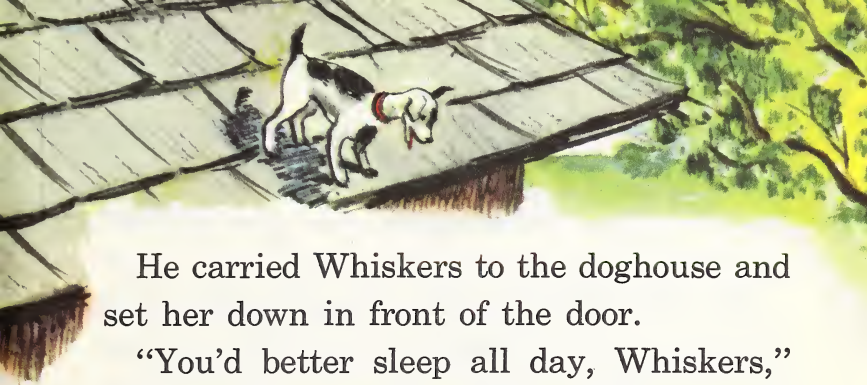
To Tommy's delight, Whiskers stood up on the window sill as if she thought something special was expected of her. She whimpered a little as she always did when she was trying to understand what somebody wanted her to do.

"Allay-oo!" Tommy repeated, as he lifted his arms a little higher. This time Whiskers understood what he wanted. With a joyful bark she leaped down and landed in her master's arms.

"What do you know about that!" Tommy exclaimed. "I own a trick dog!" He scratched Whiskers' neck behind the floppy white ear and then behind the upstanding black ear.

"Tommy Carson!" a voice called from inside the house. "It's time for you to go to school. Get on your way."

"Sure, Ella. Thanks for telling me," he said politely. Ella kept house for Tommy and his father. It wasn't always easy to be polite to her, because she often declared that she didn't like dogs.



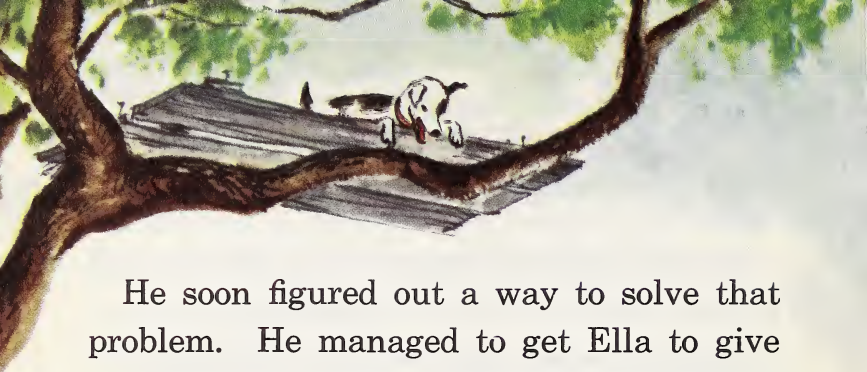
He carried Whiskers to the doghouse and set her down in front of the door.

“You’d better sleep all day, Whiskers,” he said. “Tonight we’ll begin training.”

Whiskers did not try to follow Tommy as he started off. Ella had trained her not to leave the yard.

After school that day Tommy had Whiskers jump several times from the window sill. A day or two later he had her jump from the lower edge of the roof of the woodshed. After a few days more she was jumping from the top of the woodshed.

Then Tommy built a platform in the fork of their tall oak tree. The jump from that was much higher than the jump from the shed or the window sill. Whiskers didn’t mind it, but she landed with such force that Tommy was afraid she might break a leg.



He soon figured out a way to solve that problem. He managed to get Ella to give him an old blanket. Then he rounded up four boys to hold the blanket by its four corners and make a safe landing place.

Whiskers always whimpered a little while she was waiting to jump. That seemed to be a part of her act. But she took courage when Tommy called, "Allay-oo!" in a voice that meant, "Come on, Whiskers! I'm here to catch you."

Before long all the neighbors knew that Whiskers was a smart pup. Even Andy Bush said so, and he had a smart little bulldog of his own.



When the Red Cross drive began that fall, the boys and girls in Tommy's school talked over ways of earning money.

"Why not have a circus?" Tommy asked. "We could put on a dog show and sell tickets at a nickel apiece for the acts."

"Where could we have it?" Andy asked.

"Maybe Ella will let us have it in our back yard," Tommy replied, "—if I help her with the housecleaning."

The idea caught on like wildfire. Andy promised to put on an act with his bulldog Jazbo. He had trained Jazbo to hold on to a cloth with his teeth and let Andy swing him around and around in a circle.

Jim Bridges felt sure his mother would make some of her delicious candied apples that they could sell for ten cents apiece.

Jack Grundy would manage to find someone to lend him a record player and some band records of real circus music.

Other boys and girls began to make plans for selling popcorn balls, peanuts, balloons, horns, and whistles.

At last the day for the circus came. In the Carson kitchen popcorn balls were piled neatly on tables, and rows of candied apples stood on the window sills.

Tommy had covered the platform in the oak tree with a red tablecloth. The blanket for Whiskers to land on and the boys to hold it were on hand.

One corner of the woodshed had been made into a ticket office. Above the ticket window was a sign that read:

AMAZING ACTS

BY

FAMOUS DOGS

Tickets 5 cents

In another part of the woodshed Tommy and Andy were busy brushing and combing Whiskers and Jazbo. No circus dogs were ever brushed and combed more carefully.



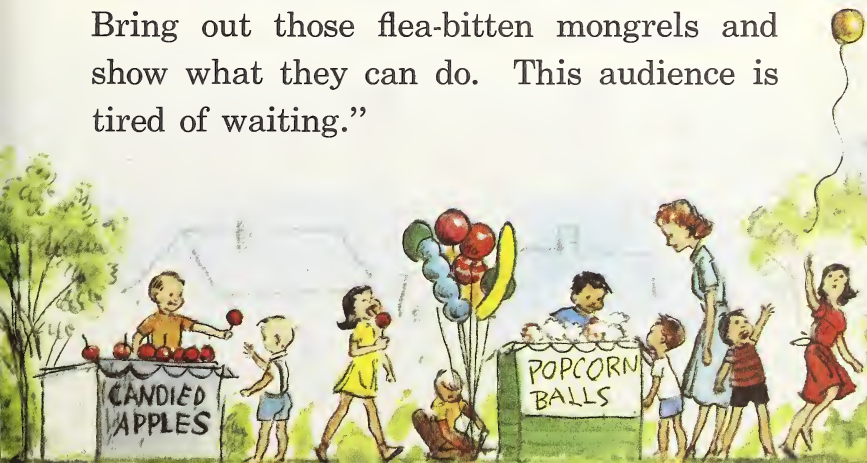
Early in the afternoon people began coming in to buy tickets. When Andy happened to look up from his combing and brushing, he was amazed.

“Look at that crowd!” he exclaimed. “The mayor himself is out there.”

“Even the milkman and the groceryman are taking time off to see the show,” said Tommy. “And there’s the nice old lady who sells eggs to Ella. Everybody is here!”

Suddenly he felt scared. Suppose Whiskers should get frightened and refuse to jump. He was almost afraid for the show to begin.

Before he could do any more worrying, he heard Ella’s voice. “Tommy Carson!” she called out. “What are you boys doing? Bring out those flea-bitten mongrels and show what they can do. This audience is tired of waiting.”



The audience laughed. "That's right!" someone shouted. "Bring on the famous dogs, fleas or no fleas."

Andy and Jazbo were billed for the first act. Andy gave one last touch of the comb and brush to Jazbo and signalled to Jack Grundy to put on a record and start up the music.

When Andy stepped out, he was wearing a bright red shirt, a tall stovepipe hat, and fierce-looking, black mustaches. Over one arm he carried a square of yellow cloth which he waved at the audience.

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!" he shouted above the loud music. "I give you the world-famous Jazbo! Jazbo, the bulldog with the courage of a lion and the teeth of a bear trap!"

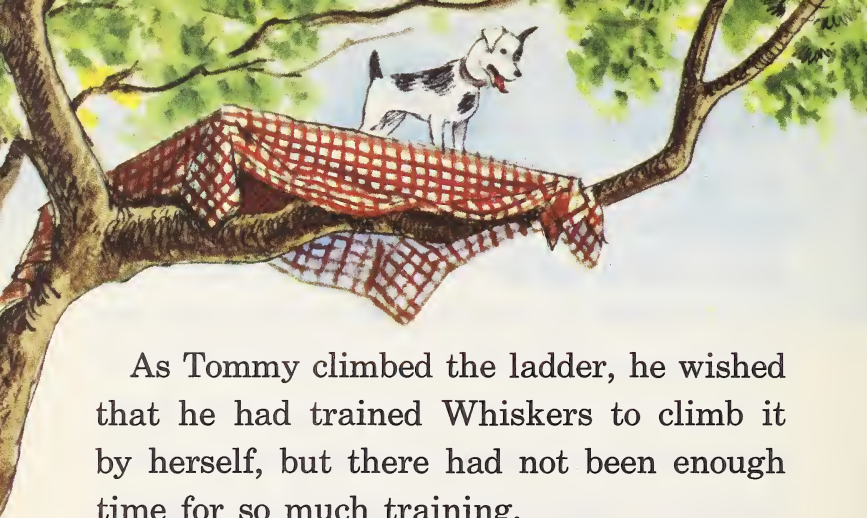


The audience cheered, the woodshed door flew open, and out streaked Jazbo. Straight to Andy he dashed, leaped up, and caught the yellow cloth with his teeth. Then around and around he let Andy swing him. The faster and louder the music was played, the faster went Jazbo.

When the record came to an end, Andy slowed down, and the bulldog came back to earth. The audience cheered and clapped, Jazbo barked, and Andy bowed as he backed toward the woodshed.

Then came the turn of Whiskers and Tommy. Tommy came out wearing a green shirt, a tall hat, black mustaches, and a cape over his shoulders. He carried Whiskers in his arms as he walked to the ladder that led up to the platform in the oak tree.





As Tommy climbed the ladder, he wished that he had trained Whiskers to climb it by herself, but there had not been enough time for so much training.

Tommy put Whiskers on the platform and went back down the ladder. She looked very small as she stood up there all alone.

By this time, Tommy's four helpers had stretched the blanket to catch Whiskers. To make sure that it was tight enough to break the force of her fall, Tommy leaned forward and pushed both hands down on it. Then he looked up at Whiskers and also gave the signal for the music to begin.

Whiskers' whimper was drowned out by a record playing the famous circus tune:

"He flies through the air
With the greatest of ease . . ."

“Allay-oo!” Tommy called out, but his voice sounded weak and shaky.

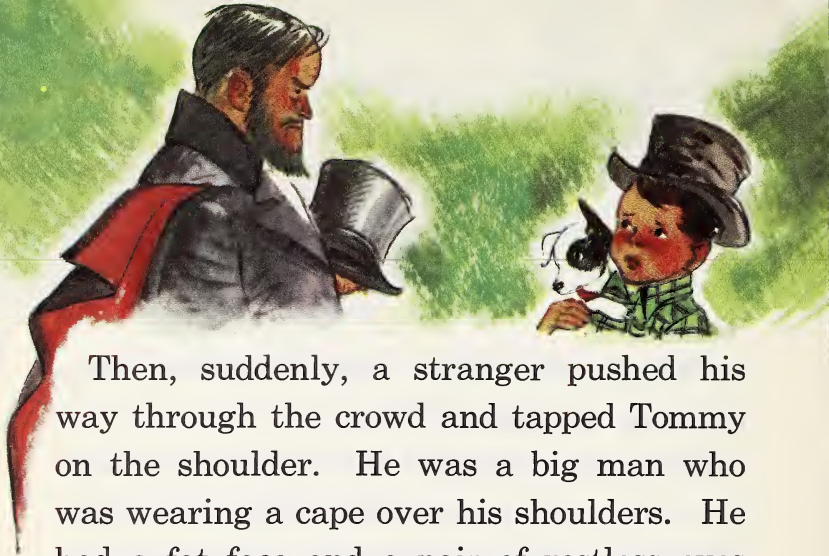
Whiskers looked over the edge of the platform, wagged her tail weakly, but made no move to jump. Was her courage failing her?

“Allay-oo!” This time Tommy’s voice rang out strong and clear.

Whiskers gathered her four feet under her body, making a bundle of herself. Then she gave a short bark and leaped out and down onto the blanket.

For a little while after that, Tommy hardly realized what was going on. He did know that people were crowding around to praise the fine performance. He also realized that the mayor was asking that the performance be repeated at the Children’s Home on the following Saturday.





Then, suddenly, a stranger pushed his way through the crowd and tapped Tommy on the shoulder. He was a big man who was wearing a cape over his shoulders. He had a fat face and a pair of restless eyes that never looked very long in any one direction. Tommy didn't like his looks.

"Too bad she can't climb a ladder!" the stranger said, pointing a fat finger at Whiskers. "If she could, she'd be worth fifty dollars to me. But she's worth half that much, I guess. I'll give you twenty-five dollars in cash for her right now. That's a good offer. Let's shake hands on it."

Tommy was too surprised and shocked to reply. The idea of selling Whiskers was so hateful to him that he just drew back and held her a little tighter.

“Well, come on,” the man said. “I’m the ringmaster for a big circus. I’m offering cash for your dog. What do you say?”

“I’ve got to go into the house,” said Tommy. “I think I hear Ella calling me.”

He streaked into the kitchen, dropping Whiskers just outside the door. Ella was putting a pie into the oven.

“Ella!” he gasped. “You’ve just got to listen to me! You’ve just got to.”

“What now?” was all she said. Then she saw that Whiskers had followed Tommy into the kitchen.

“Tommy Carson!” she cried. “Get that mongrel off my clean floor. I just got it swept up.”

Tommy picked up Whiskers and told Ella about the stranger. He talked so fast that Ella had no chance to put in a word.



When Tommy finished the story, he waited for Ella to speak.

“Well!” she said and sniffed. “If that mongrel is worth twenty-five dollars in cash to someone else, she’s worth that much cash to us.”

Tommy threw his arms around Ella. “Oh, Ella!” he cried. “I didn’t know you liked Whiskers.”

“I don’t!” she declared. “But I won’t see you roped in by a stranger. I figure that you must have taken in five dollars at that performance today. I know Whiskers is worth something, but she’s still a flea-bitten mongrel so far as this kitchen is concerned. Outside with her!”

Tommy chuckled as he took Whiskers outside. “Ella really likes you,” he said, “but she’d never admit it.”

Tommy’s father was away on a business trip, but he was expected home that evening. Tommy was looking forward to telling him all about Whiskers’ performance and the stranger’s offer to buy her.



But about an hour before bedtime the telephone rang. It was Tommy's father calling to say that he couldn't get home for several days. That news made Tommy sad. He began to feel sorry for himself.

But Tommy didn't have a chance to get really sad. Just then he felt Whiskers' paw on his knee. She had come in to shake hands. As she tipped her head to look up at him, her upstanding black ear and her floppy white ear looked so funny that Tommy had to laugh right out loud.

When bedtime came, Tommy begged Ella to let Whiskers sleep in his room that night. "I've combed and brushed all the fleas out of her hair," he explained.

But Ella said NO in a way that showed she meant it. So out to the doghouse went Whiskers.



Tommy woke up early the next morning. His first thought was of Whiskers. He went to the window and whistled, but she did not appear. "Just a lazy pup," he thought. "One performance made her a sleepy-head."

He dressed and went out into the back yard and whistled for her. When he got no answer, he became much concerned.

He hurried to the doghouse and looked in. Whiskers was not there. In great alarm he searched every part of the yard. Then he began to search every street in the neighborhood. There was no sign or word of Whiskers anywhere.

"She's probably off chasing rabbits," Ella said lightly, but she was really concerned. The next day she began looking over the Lost-and-Found notices in the paper.

A few days later Ella was looking at the evening paper. Suddenly she called out, "Tommy! Tommy! Come here."

He came running. "What is it, Ella?"

"Listen to this," she said. Then she read aloud:

WORLD'S GREATEST CIRCUS! AFTERNOON AND EVENING PERFORMANCES. TRAINS FROM CENTERVILLE ARRIVE IN TIME FOR BOTH PERFORMANCES.

Ella laid down the paper and looked over her glasses at Tommy as she always did when she suspected a trick had been played on her.

"Tommy, you and I are going to the circus tomorrow," she declared.

Usually Tommy enjoyed a train ride. He liked to count the telephone poles and figure how fast he was travelling. But the ride the next day gave him no pleasure.

Usually a circus delighted him, but this time he had no interest in any performance. Even the clowns did not seem funny.

He recognized the ringmaster as the fat stranger who had offered to buy Whiskers, but that didn't excite him. The man had said he was a ringmaster.

Today he wore a tall hat and a checked shirt under a red cape with gold stars on it. He had black mustaches, and he carried a long black whip.

As the last act began, Ella whispered to Tommy, "I suspected that fat fellow wearing the red cape might have stolen Whiskers, but I guess I accused him wrongly." She began pulling on her coat.

Just as everyone was ready to leave, the ringmaster cracked his long black whip. Then he shouted these words:



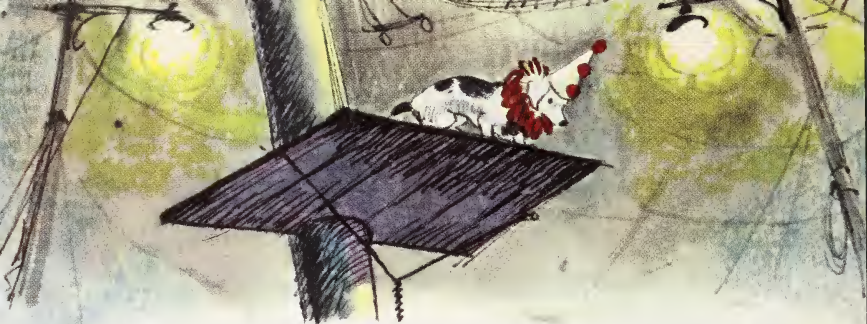
“LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! Because you have been such a great and wonderful audience, we are giving you an extra act for only twenty-five cents. Princess, the most daring little dog on earth, will break all records for leaping from a high platform into a safety net.

“Step right up and get your tickets for this amazing performance. Only twenty-five cents.”

Ella opened her pocketbook and bought tickets for Tommy and herself. Neither of them said a word. With fast-beating hearts they followed the crowds into the side-show.

Into the ring ran a clown leading a small black and white dog. Tommy saw that one of the dog's ears was floppy like Whiskers', but he couldn't see the other ear plainly. It was covered by a silly little clown's hat. Around the dog's neck was a large red and white ruffle.

“That dog looks like Whiskers,” Tommy whispered. Ella nodded.



Some men placed a ladder against a platform that was on top of a pole. The band started to play, "Oh, he flies through the air with the greatest of ease . . ."

Tommy started for the ring, but Ella held him back. "You wait and see if that really is Whiskers," she whispered. "Don't go out there until you're sure."

The fat ringmaster in the red cape cracked his whip again. Up the ladder the clown carried the dog. Then he came down, leaving the little dog alone on the platform.

Four men rushed forward with a large safety net. The music stopped, and the audience became very quiet. The clown did a somersault and came up on his feet.

"Allay-oop!" he cried. His voice sounded high like a boy's. The dog stood very still.

Then from the platform came a weak little whimpering sound. Tommy and Ella both recognized that whimper. Ella didn't try to hold Tommy back now. He pushed through the crowd and dashed into the middle of the ring.

"Allay-oop!" called Tommy clearly. And now the little dog did not wait. She leaped through the air and landed in the safety net. Then like a flash she dashed to the edge of the net and leaped into Tommy's arms. She was wild with joy. How the audience clapped and cheered!

The clown clapped and cheered too. "You will have to teach me just the right way to say 'Allay-oop,' boy," he said, putting his arm around Tommy's shoulders. "I've been working on that call ever since we got the dog.



"I finally had to use a battery to give her a little shock to make her jump. The shock from the battery didn't hurt her, but it did make her jump."

Then Tommy explained, "Mr. Clown, she won't jump for anyone but me. You see, she's my dog."

"Now wait a minute, boy," said the clown. "Our ringmaster, Mr. Smart, bought the dog from the boy who owned her. He paid two hundred dollars for her. She belongs to the circus now. You can't claim her."

"But she belongs to me, and I didn't sell her," said Tommy.

"Now, see here," said the clown as he clapped a hand on Tommy's shoulder.

"You take your hand off that boy!" said Ella, pushing through the bystanders. "And bring that ringmaster here. It's just as I suspected. He did steal that dog!"



The ringmaster could not be found. He had last been seen hurrying out of the big tent with a suitcase in one hand.

The clown looked concerned. "I think we'd better go to see Mr. Farrington," he said. "He is the manager. My name is Turnip-seed."

"This mongrel may not be worth much," declared Ella, "but it will give me great pleasure to tell that manager of yours a thing or two."

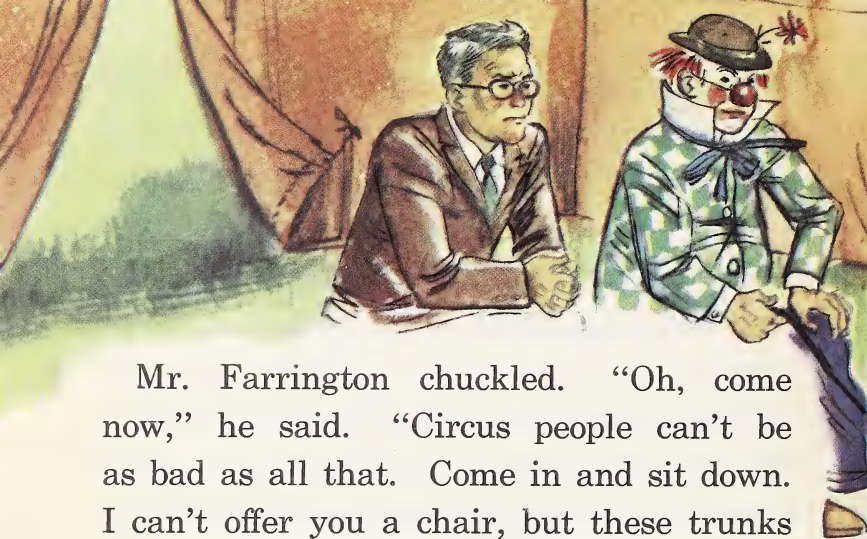
"Mr. Farrington usually does any telling that has to be done," said Turnip-seed with a grin and a wink at Tommy.

"Not this time," said Ella, following right along behind Turnip-seed.

Soon they were at Mr. Farrington's tent. Turnip-seed called Mr. Farrington, and a pleasant-looking man came out.

"Hello, Turnip-seed!" said Mr. Farrington. "I'm glad to see you! But you don't look very happy. Who are your friends?"

"We're not friends with any of you circus people right now," replied Ella.



Mr. Farrington chuckled. "Oh, come now," he said. "Circus people can't be as bad as all that. Come in and sit down. I can't offer you a chair, but these trunks are not too uncomfortable."

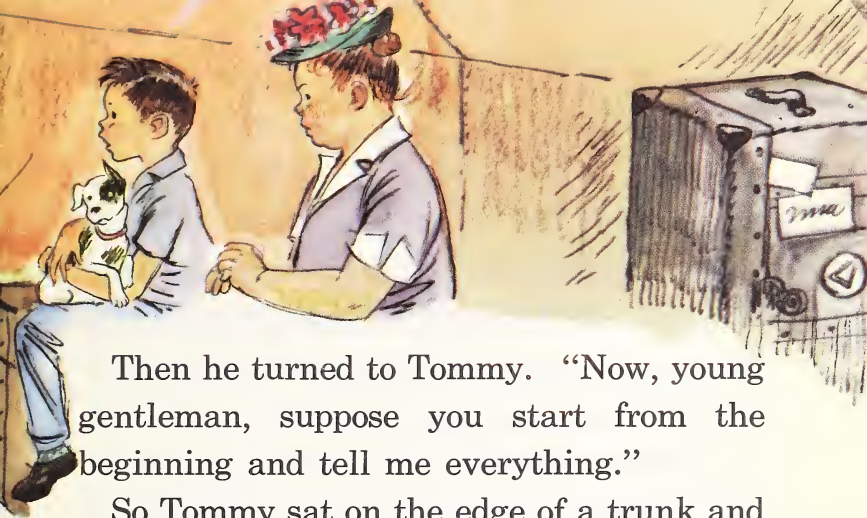
"We've no time to sit," said Ella. "We've got to catch a train back to Centerville in just eleven minutes."

"Centerville? Why that's where..." began Mr. Farrington.

"Yes," spoke up Ella. "That's where that ringmaster of yours stole this fine dog. We've come to claim her."

Tommy was filled with amusement at Ella's statement. Never before had he heard her call Whiskers a fine dog.

The circus manager looked puzzled. "I'm afraid I don't understand," he said.



Then he turned to Tommy. “Now, young gentleman, suppose you start from the beginning and tell me everything.”

So Tommy sat on the edge of a trunk and told how the boys and girls of Centerville had put on a show to raise money for the Red Cross. He told how the ringmaster had come up to him and offered to buy Whiskers for twenty-five dollars in cash.

Then he explained that the next morning Whiskers was gone. He told how he had searched the neighborhood for her and how at last he had found her in the circus, wearing a silly cap over her upstanding ear, so that only her floppy ear showed.

Turnip-seed chuckled and clapped his hand on Tommy’s shoulder with such force that it almost upset the boy.

“Mr. Farrington, I understand now why Mr. Smart was concerned about covering up Whiskers’ ear,” he said. “He was afraid Tommy or someone else who knew Whiskers would recognize the dog. Smart claimed he paid two hundred dollars for the dog because you wanted a dog act in the show.”

Mr. Farrington was shocked.

“TURNIP-SEED!” he roared in a voice that sounded like a mad bull. “WHERE’S SMART?”

“He’s disappeared, sir,” said Turnip-seed. “We won’t see him again until the police can catch up with him.”

“It’s all too clear!” said Mr. Farrington. “Smart never paid a cent for this dog. He stole her and charged me two hundred dollars for her.”

Ella looked at her watch. Then she jumped up as if she had been shocked by a charge from a battery.

“Tommy Carson!” she cried. “We’ve got just one minute to catch that train to Centerville!”

“Now keep calm, Miss,” said Mr. Farrington. “I’m in a bad spot. I’ve lost my ringmaster and a good dog act. I’ll have to be ringmaster for the evening performance. But I’d like the pleasure of presenting Whiskers’ act.”

Then Mr. Farrington turned to Tommy. “Young gentleman, will you stay for the evening performance and help Turnip-seed with the act?” he asked. “If you will, you’ll have not only your dog to take back to Centerville, but also a gift of twenty-five dollars in cash for the Red Cross.”

Tommy looked at Ella.

“Well . . . I guess it will be all right to wait for the midnight bus to Centerville just this once,” said Ella. And that is what they did.





Unusual Meanings

To read and think over

Sometimes when you are reading, you will find a group of words that means something different from what it seems to say.

Bill was reading an exciting story about a robbery. He came to these two sentences:

"I'm all at sea," the policeman said. "I don't see how the robber could have got into this place."

"That's queer," thought Bill. "The policeman wasn't near the ocean. *All at sea* doesn't mean what it seems to say. Some of the words show that the policeman can't figure out what happened. I guess that *all at sea* means *puzzled*."

The group of words *all at sea* didn't make sense to Bill when he first read it. He realized that the group of words must mean something different from what it seemed to say. Then he used some of the other words to help him figure out what the words did mean.

A little later Bill read that the policeman hadn't caught the robber. The policeman was telling another policeman about it. "If he hadn't taken to his heels, I'd have had him," he said.

Bill thought to himself, "The group of words *taken to his heels* doesn't mean much of anything by itself. But I know that the robber ran away. *Taken to his heels* must mean *ran away*."

When you find in your reading a group of words that doesn't seem to mean what it says, watch out! Think what the other words in the sentences tell you. Often that will help you figure out what the group of words means.

The following sentences were also in Bill's book. Figure out for yourself what the policeman meant when he said the words in heavy, black print. The policeman has caught the robber and is talking to the chief of police.

"Well, Chief, here he is! Several of his shots just missed me before I got him. It was a **close call** for me."

Talking together

Help your class answer these questions:

1. Which of the following sentences tells best what the policeman meant when he said that it was a **close call** for him?

The telephone rang in the next room.

The policeman was very nearly shot and might have been badly hurt or even killed by the robber.

The policeman had only a short way to go to find the robber.

2. You will often see a group of words which means something different from what it seems to say. What can you do to find out what it means?

Working together

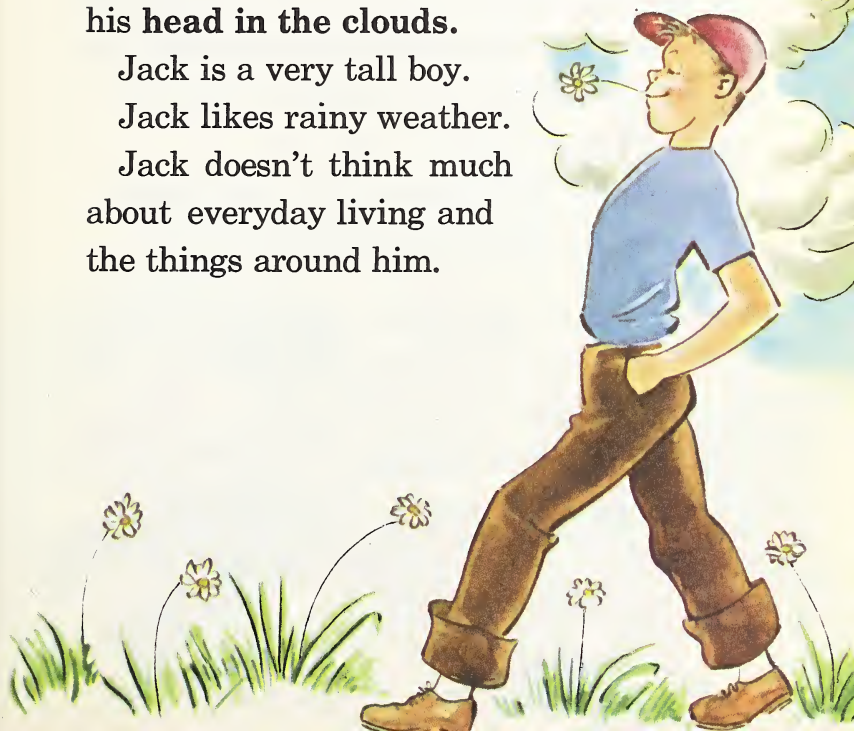
In each numbered group of sentences that follows there is a group of words printed in very black letters that means something different from what it seems to say. After each group of sentences there are three statements. Help your class decide which of the statements tells best what the words in black type really mean.

1. Jack would have no interest in helping us figure out what to do. He always has **his head in the clouds**.

Jack is a very tall boy.

Jack likes rainy weather.

Jack doesn't think much about everyday living and the things around him.



2. Dick's brother said, "Well, I'll **stretch a point** and do it for you. But just this once, mind you! I want you to learn to do things for yourself."

Dick's brother can reach higher than Dick can.

Dick's brother is going to do something for Dick that usually he wouldn't do.

Dick's brother will make a sharp point on something for Dick.

3. Helen's little brother is the **apple of her eye**. She likes him so much that she takes him with her everywhere.

Helen has an apple in her eye.

Helen likes her little brother very much.

Helen likes apples very much.

4. Sam can't **keep his mind** on his school work. He keeps thinking about the ball game to be played this afternoon.

Sam can't get his head near his work.

Sam can't remember how to do his work.

Sam isn't able to keep thinking about what he is doing.

5. Grace was left in the dark about the plans for the party. Everyone wanted it to be a complete surprise for her.

Grace was left in a dark room.

It was too dark for Grace to see.

Grace wasn't told about the plans.

6. Tom said that he couldn't think of anything to wear to the party. But, I'm sure he will dig up something.

Tom will find something to wear to the party.

Tom keeps his clothes under the ground.

Tom likes to dig.



The Tree by the Road to Turntown



It is impossible to find out just how the oak tree came to grow beside the road to Turntown. But it might have happened in this way.

One autumn day, a squirrel was scampering along the road with an acorn in its mouth. A boy and his dog were on their way to Turntown. The dog saw the squirrel and began to chase it. The squirrel dropped the acorn and ran for a nearby tree.

As the boy ran after the dog, he stepped on the acorn without knowing it and forced it into the soft ground.

All autumn and all winter the acorn lay buried in the ground beside the road. Then spring came, and the sun began to warm the earth. As the days passed, the sun warmed the earth more and more. Now and then a gentle rain fell and wet the soil where the acorn lay buried.

Inside the shell of the acorn, something was alive. It was the seed of an oak tree. All through the autumn and the winter it stayed in its shell beside the road to Turntown. Then the warm sun and the gentle rain of the spring started it growing.

It was very tiny at first, but as it grew it became bigger. It stretched and stretched with growing until POP! It had broken the shell of the acorn.

That very day out came a tiny rootlet and began to poke down into the soil beside the road to Turntown.

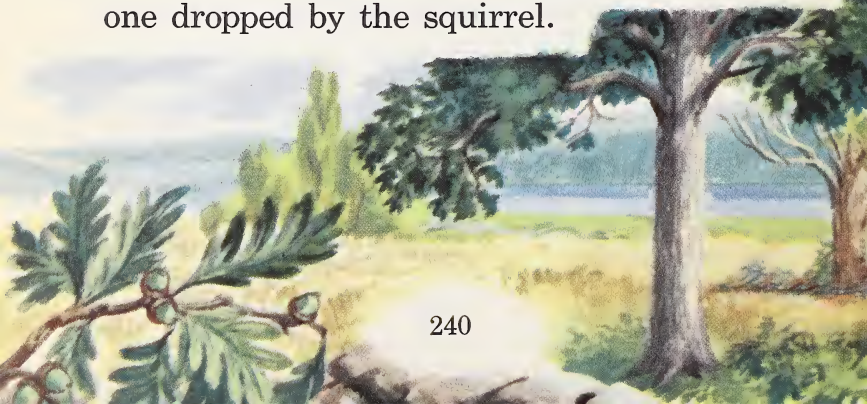
A tiny stem came out of the acorn, too. The stem began at once to stretch up from the acorn in the soil. It reached up into the sunshine.

Soon tiny buds began to form. Then little leaves began to unwrap themselves from the stem. That was how the oak tree began beside the road to Turntown.

No one noticed the tree for several years. But in those years its roots grew longer and poked farther into the soil. The stem put out branches on all sides and pushed its tip upward, higher and higher. The leaves, which were few at first, became thick on every branch and twig.

Every spring the tiny buds opened on the twigs, and new green leaves came out. As the tree grew older, the leaves grew longer.

After several years tiny blossoms began to pop out each spring. The blossoms changed to tiny green acorns which grew and grew until each one looked like the one dropped by the squirrel.

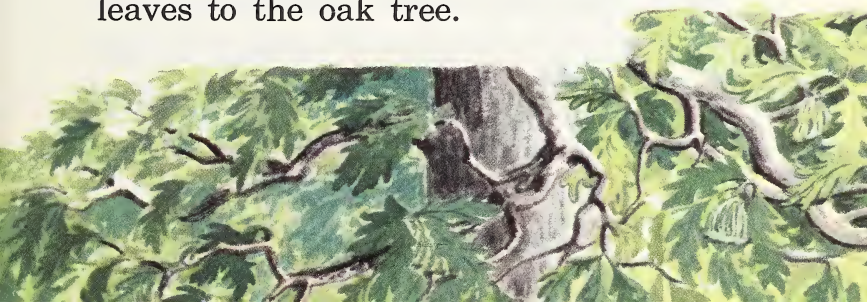


Year after year the summer rains watered the tree, and during the bright summer days the warm sun helped it grow.

Every autumn the tree was covered with copper-colored leaves. The acorns on the ends of the twigs dropped and were scattered by squirrels that gathered them and stored some away for winter eating.

Then the days grew colder and colder. The leaves on the oak tree changed to brown. They wrinkled up until they looked like wrinkled pieces of brown wrapping paper.

And after winter, another spring came, bringing new buds and new bright green leaves to the oak tree.



Each time the four seasons passed, the tree was a year older, a year larger, and a year stronger.

People who travelled the road to Turntown began to notice the tree. "A sturdy tree," one would say. "A straight tree with very good shape," others would say. "A fine piece of timber!" someone else would say.

And so the oak tree came to have many friends among the people who travelled that way.

But don't think that the sturdy oak had a lazy, carefree life. Trees are always in danger. The young oak tree had enemies as well as friends.

One winter day when the tree was still very young, it was attacked by an enemy that almost killed it.

The enemy was a rabbit that lived in the nearby meadow. The rabbit was in search of food. Because snow covered the food that he was in the habit of eating, he was forced to do something that almost killed the little tree.



As the rabbit passed the young oak on his search for food in the meadow, he noticed the tree. He stopped and began to nibble the bark. It tasted good, so he nibbled more. As he nibbled, he moved around the tree trunk.

The rabbit had nibbled nearly halfway around the trunk of the oak tree when a farm wagon came down the road and frightened him. He ran off into the meadow to hide in the tall dry grass. After the wagon had gone by, the rabbit did not return to the tree.

It was lucky that the wagon scared the rabbit before he had nibbled off a ring of bark all the way around the tree. The tree would have died if the rabbit had nibbled a ring around it.



Another time, years later, the sturdy tree was again attacked by enemies and almost died.

Hundreds of tiny insects crept up the trunk and began to nibble at the leaves on every twig. These insect enemies would have eaten all the leaves on the oak tree if it had not been for a pair of orioles.

Several weeks before, the orioles had been looking for a place to build a nest. They stopped to rest in the branches of the oak tree near the grassy meadow.

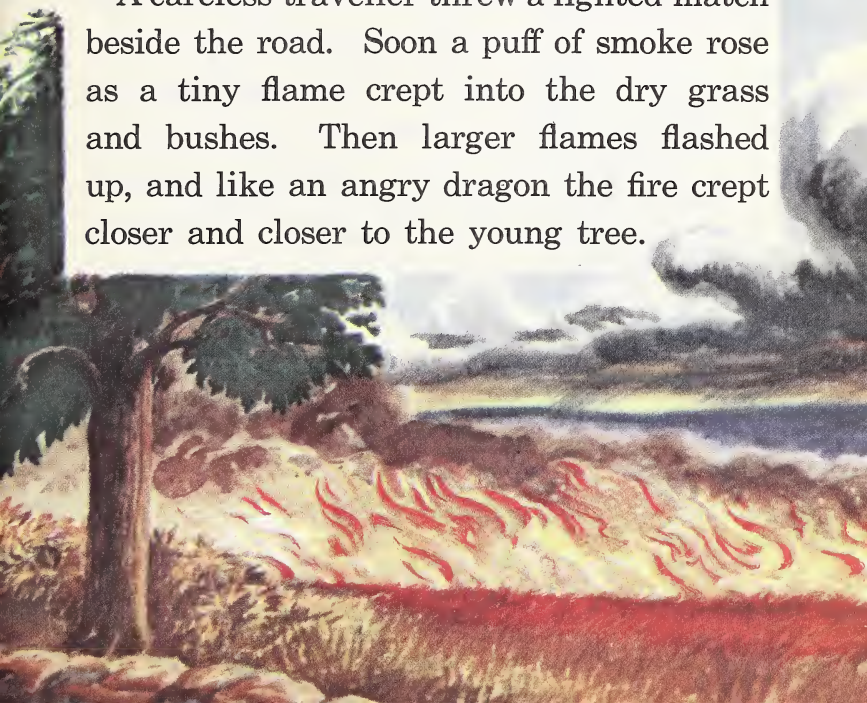
The orioles liked the tree so much that they decided to remain there that season. They built their swinging nest on one of its sturdiest branches.

Soon there were four eggs in the nest. Then there were four hungry little orioles to be fed. Every day the parents had to find hundreds of insects for their babies to gobble up.

The parent orioles soon found the insects that were eating the leaves of the oak tree and carried them to their babies. If the parent birds had not kept the insects from eating the leaves that season, the tree would have died.

Then one day late in summer, the tree had another narrow escape. No rain had fallen for weeks. The meadow and all the grass and bushes beside the road to Turntown were dry and brown.

A careless traveller threw a lighted match beside the road. Soon a puff of smoke rose as a tiny flame crept into the dry grass and bushes. Then larger flames flashed up, and like an angry dragon the fire crept closer and closer to the young tree.



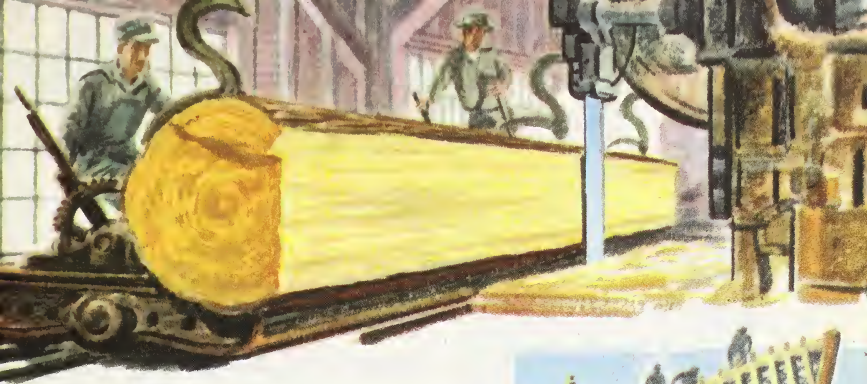
But already clouds had begun to gather. The sky had grown dark. Just before the fire reached the tree, the first drops of rain began to spill from the clouds.

Then the rain poured down from the sky and wet the grass and the bushes. The fire died out, and the tree was saved once again.

Enemies attacked the tree season after season, but it lived on and grew skyward more than eighty feet. Its trunk was so big that it took two tall men with arms outstretched to reach around it.

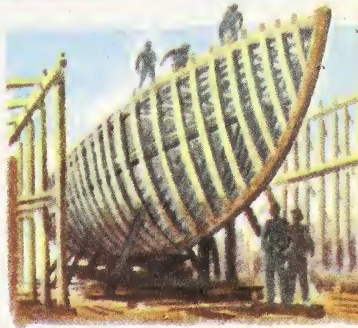
No one will ever know how long the tree might have lived and how large it might have grown. Part of it sailed away across the sea, part of it was used in building a bridge, and another part was used in making a house.

Those things all began to happen one day when the owner of a sawmill bought the tree. He had it cut down and sawed into thick, strong boards at his mill. The boards were laid on other piles of oak lumber.



A ship builder visited the sawmill and looked over the fine lumber.

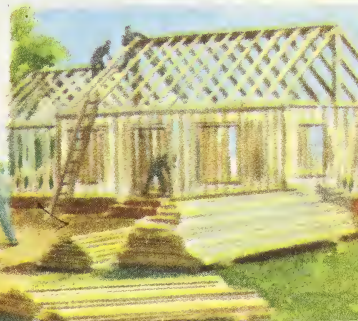
"I'll take some of this oak lumber for the ship I am building," he said.



A bridge builder came to the mill and saw the lumber. He said, "I need some of this oak for bridge timbers."



And a house builder came to the mill. He said, "I will use some of this oak lumber in a new house. There is no better wood for floors."



And so it happened that the sturdy old oak was used in building a ship, a bridge, and a house.

If you should ever travel on the road to Turntown, you might see the huge stump of that old tree. Nearby in the meadow you might see sturdy oaks that were started from acorns dropped by the old tree and scattered by squirrels.

And maybe if you walked across the meadow, your foot might push an acorn into the soil. In turn the acorn might poke its rootlets downward and its stem upward. Then after a long, long time it might grow to be a sturdy oak. That is the way of trees.



An illustration of a young boy with blonde hair, wearing a white shirt with red embroidery and blue trousers, standing next to a brown and white cow. The cow has a yellow bell around its neck with the letter 'R' on it. They are in a green field with a blue river and pink blossoms in the background.

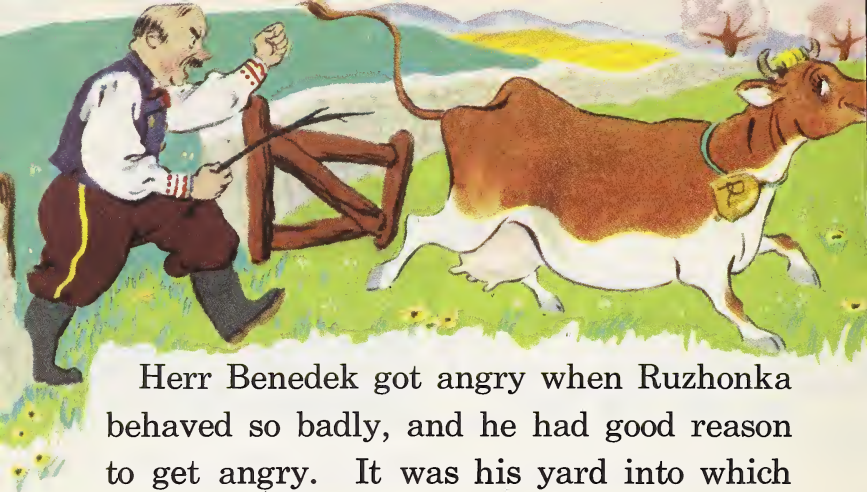
Ruzhonka

There was once a cow named Ruzhonka. She belonged to the family of a boy named Aari.

Ruzhonka was as gentle and as charming as a cow should be, except for one thing. She would not stay in her own pasture yard. Every day she jumped the fence and ate the grass in the yard next door.

Every morning when Aari led Ruzhonka from her stall, he would say, “Dear, charming Ruzhonka, please do not jump the fence today.”

Ruzhonka would wink her large brown eyes and switch her tail in a most friendly way. But the minute Aari turned his back, over the pasture fence Ruzhonka would leap.



Herr Benedek got angry when Ruzhonka behaved so badly, and he had good reason to get angry. It was his yard into which she jumped every day. Herr Benedek began to say frightful things when he chased Ruzhonka home.

“Get out of here, you wicked, contrary beast!” he would shout. “The next time I catch you eating my grass I will cut off your pretty tail!”

Or he might declare, “If I find you here again, I’ll cut you up into roasts and make your hide into leather.”

One day Herr Benedek suggested a way to keep Ruzhonka in her own pasture. “Why don’t you tie her to a stake?” he asked Aari. “Have you tried a rope? Have you tried a chain?”

But long before that Aari had tried using a rope to tie Ruzhonka to a stake. She ate the rope. Then he tried chaining her to the stake. She snapped the chain in two by stretching it around the corner of the house.

Herr Benedek bought a fierce watchdog. It growled and barked at everyone who passed by. But Ruzhonka switched her tail and jumped over the fence and made friends with the fierce dog in no time at all.

Then Herr Benedek really became impatient.

"This is too much!" he declared. "There is nothing to do but to punish this creature by sending her to jail. A good strong jail is the only place for such contrary animals."

"Oh, no! No!" cried Aari. He could not bear to think of such a gentle and charming cow being locked up behind the bars of a jail.

But a police officer came and led Ruzhonka away to the city jail. The mayor himself put Ruzhonka into a room by herself and turned the key in the lock.



“You will stay here in jail a whole week and live on just hay and water,” he said to the cow. “That will punish you, and maybe it will teach you a lesson.”

But did Ruzhonka learn her lesson? She did not. The moment she was back in her own pasture, over the fence she jumped into Herr Benedek’s yard.

“This is the end!” screamed Herr Benedek. “Tomorrow Ruzhonka goes to the butcher to be killed and cut up into roasts!”

Aari was so frightened that he began to weep right out loud. “No! No!” he cried. “Not to the butcher! Not to the butcher!”

“Give Ruzhonka one more chance. Come with me. We’ll take her to the judge. He is a very wise man. Maybe he can think of something we can do.”

“Oh, all right,” growled Herr Benedek. “But I don’t think it will do any good. Ruzhonka is just a mean, contrary cow. The butcher shop or the meat market is the place for her.”

The black-robed judge listened to the story that the two neighbors told. Then he asked, “Is the grass on Herr Benedek’s property any greener than Aari’s?”

“Oh, no, sir,” said Herr Benedek. “It’s just the same.”

“Perhaps Ruzhonka is badly treated at home,” the judge suggested.

“Oh, no, sir,” said Aari. “We love her dearly. We treat her well.”

“Is Ruzhonka old enough to know better?” the wise judge asked.

“Yes, indeed,” said Aari. “She seems able to understand what we want of her, and she does what we expect of her in every way except this.”

“I see,” said the wise judge. “I suspect Ruzhonka is a contrary cow, don’t you? She just likes to jump that fence.”



Aari and Herr Benedek agreed that Ruzhonka never seemed quite so happy as when she was jumping the fence.

“Well then,” said the wise judge, “I don’t think it will be necessary to send her to the butcher.”

He called Herr Benedek and Aari to him and whispered something to them that Ruzhonka did not hear.

“Well,” said Herr Benedek, “it sounds stupid, but we’ll do as you suggest.”

Herr Benedek took Ruzhonka with him and led her into his own yard. Then he closed the gate and left her there.

Ruzhonka was surprised. She looked around a little puzzled, then slowly lowered her mouth to the grass. But before she could take a bite, a wild notion took hold of her. She felt a strong desire to jump the fence.

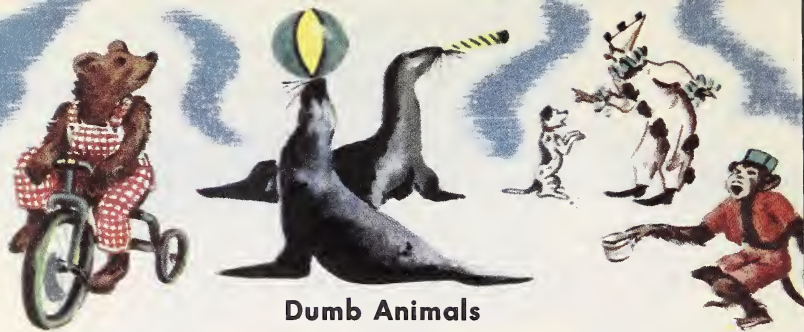
Then she heard Aari call, "Dear, charming Ruzhonka, do not be contrary. Please do not jump the fence today!"

That settled it. Without waiting another moment, Ruzhonka switched her tail and jumped over the fence. Aari was so surprised and pleased that he laughed out loud.

Every morning after that Aari led Ruzhonka into Herr Benedek's yard, and every morning over the fence she would jump right back into her own pasture.

"Wonderful, charming Ruzhonka!" Herr Benedek would exclaim. "A good cow she is but so contrary!"





Dumb Animals

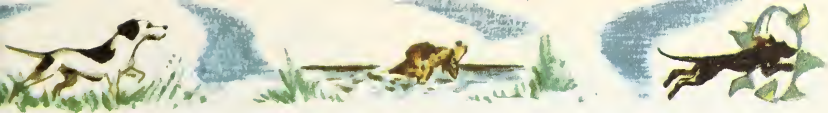
Animals do not speak or write any language such as people use. For that reason they are often called dumb animals.

By dumb animals, we do not mean that animals are not smart. We mean that animals do not talk. Animals have no spoken language.

People who have trained animals or have used them for work know how smart many animals are.

The milkman's horse usually knew the stops as well as the milkman himself. Many people who have lost their sight have seeing-eye dogs that have been trained to lead them wherever they desire to go.

Even though dumb animals have no spoken language, they often seem to understand our language surprisingly well.



Many animals learn to take part in clever circus acts. A smart circus animal often learns to direct other animals in a show too. Some learn to help put up the tents. They not only learn what to do, but they also become very willing workers.

People who train animals learn that the best way to train them is through kindness. If an animal does something well, he is praised and rewarded with something that pleases him. Then he is eager to do the same thing again.

If an animal does not do as well as he is able, holding back something that he likes is better than using a whip on him. And if an animal misbehaves, taking something away that he likes will usually teach him that it pays to behave himself.

An animal trainer from one of the greatest circuses in the country has told many interesting stories about dumb animals he has known. His account of the early life of a chimpanzee follows.

A Strange Baby



Some years ago I went with a group of men to Africa to hunt animals for the circus. We set up a camp in the African jungle and began to search for animals.

One evening as we were going back to camp, we heard a weak little cry in the jungle. It sounded exactly like the cry of a baby. After a careful search we found a baby chimpanzee. He was crying for the same reason that other babies cry. He was hungry.

Nearby we found his mother and father, but both of them had been killed. We knew that he would die without his parents to take care of him. So we took the little fellow back to camp with us.

The baby chimpanzee was not very big and couldn't have been more than a month old. We named him Joe Chimp, and he became the pet of every man in camp. He liked living with the men, and they treated him almost like a human being.

Joe was always up to some mischief. He had one trick that no one liked. He crept into any empty bed he could find whenever he wanted to sleep. He could not seem to learn which bed was his.

When Joe Chimp had been with us about six months, we left our African camp to come home to Canada. We had to bring Joe with us because he had learned to live with humans and could not have taken care of himself in the African jungle.

When we reached home, we had another problem on our hands. We did not know what to do with Joe while the circus was travelling. He was still too young to be trained for the circus. We needed to find someone who would treat him just as human parents would treat their child.

Days passed, and still we had not found a home with humans for Joe. Then one day I got a great idea. I remembered that Dorothy, the daughter of one of the managers of the circus, was going to be eleven years old the next day.

I thought to myself, "Here's where Dorothy gets a birthday present that she isn't expecting." I chuckled to think of it.

Dorothy and her parents stayed all winter together at the winter quarters of the circus. When the circus left its winter quarters to travel all around the country, Dorothy and her mother returned to their home in Alberta. Alberta would be a fine place for Joe Chimp to stay.

The next morning, I combed and brushed Joe and dressed him in his best suit and hat. Then I gave him his little walking stick, and we started out to call on Dorothy.

Dorothy came to the door when Joe and I rang the bell.

"Mother! Come and see who is here!" called Dorothy over her shoulder.



Dorothy wasn't surprised to see Joe Chimp, for she had visited Joe and me several times since our return from the African jungle.

But she was surprised when I said, "Dorothy, the boys in the circus have sent you a birthday present. Here it is."

It was plain that Dorothy hadn't expected such a present, for she asked, "What can I do with a chimpanzee?"

"Take him back to Alberta with you," I said. "He'll make a wonderful friend for you to play with."

When Dorothy and her mother recovered from the shock, they decided that they could manage to take care of Joe. They understood animals and loved them.

“He has one bad trait that you should know about,” I continued. “If you don’t keep all the bedroom doors locked, he’ll get into any bed in the house.”

They remembered that bad trait, and when they had returned to Alberta, they fixed a room with special furniture for Joe. In it they put a small bed, a small chair, and a low dresser with drawers for Joe’s clothes.

Joe liked his room. And he liked his own small bed so much that he never again crept into any other. He even learned to make the bed himself and did a very fine job of it.

He also learned to go into the bathroom and wash his hands and face. Sometimes he would get under the shower bath. He’d stand under the shower turning the water on and off until someone came and pulled him out.

He never seemed to realize that someone else might want to take a shower. But that is a human trait, too.



Joe also learned to brush his own teeth. But he always used a whole tube of tooth paste each time. Taking the tube of tooth paste in his left hand, he'd pinch it until there was no paste left in the tube.

Then he'd decide he had too much tooth paste and try to put some of it back into the tube. Of course he never could, and that puzzled him greatly.

He'd have ribbons of tooth paste on his arms and on his feet and a little — a very little tooth paste — on the brush. Then he'd clean his teeth very well.

He liked clean teeth and always insisted upon cleaning them before he would go to breakfast. That is a trait that some children don't have.

Of course the bathroom always needed cleaning after Joe had brushed his teeth. But sometimes a bathroom needs cleaning after a human being has used it.

After cleaning his teeth, Joe would go directly to breakfast. He'd sit at the table with Dorothy and her mother and eat about as well as any well-trained young child.

After breakfast, Joe would always go to the kitchen to wipe the dishes for Dorothy. He never broke a single dish, but Dorothy sometimes did. When she did, he'd pick up the pieces and chatter very loudly.

His chatter probably meant, "I'm only a chimpanzee, born in the African jungle, but I know better than to break dishes."



“You’re a human being, and you’re supposed to be smarter than I. You ought to know better than to break dishes.”

He’d keep up his chatter until Dorothy took the broken pieces from him.

When Joe Chimp was three years old, the managers thought that he could be trained and could travel with the circus. I went to Dorothy’s home in Alberta to get him.

I arrived about ten o’clock one evening. Joe had already gone to bed, so I did not see him until morning. But Dorothy and her mother kept me up giving me an account of all the wonderful things Joe could do.

The next morning I arose early and took a shower before Joe was up. When I saw his toothbrush, I decided to hide it as a test to find out how smart he really was.

I was having breakfast with Dorothy and her mother when Joe got up. We heard him go directly to the bathroom and close the door. In a moment we heard the water running in the bathroom.



Then we heard noises that sounded as though the house were being pulled down. I dashed upstairs to the bathroom.

The bathroom was a sight. The floor was covered with broken glass and dirty clothes. Joe had pulled down the shower curtain and the window curtain and had thrown a drinking glass through the window.

He was on his knees in the middle of the floor, chattering to himself. He was hunting for his toothbrush. I knew that because he told me.

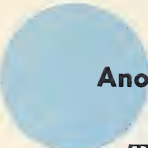
Oh, he didn't use our language to tell me, because he was a dumb animal. But nevertheless he told me. He turned to me with a troubled look on his face. He held up a tube of tooth paste and with one long finger pretended to be brushing his teeth. Then he looked to me for help.

I found that toothbrush quickly. I was afraid of what Joe would do to the rest of the house if he hunted much longer. He cleaned his teeth and came to breakfast, chattering joyfully.

I didn't doubt anything else that Dorothy and her mother told me about Joe Chimp. Joe had proved to me that he was a very smart three-year-old chimpanzee.

For many years he was recognized as a star with the circus. He may also be the chimpanzee that you have seen many times in the moving pictures, for he became a famous actor, too.





Another Common Ending — **able**

The ending **able** is often added to root words. It often has the meaning of **can be**.

Anything that is **breakable** can be broken.
Which of these are **breakable**?

lamps	shells	toy tractors
bones	oil	lemonade

Which of these are **washable**?

carpets	mittens	minds
owls	shirts	kicks

Often when words end with the vowel *e* and the *e* is silent, the *e* is dropped when the ending **able** is added.

Which of these are **usable** on a picnic?

games	a pen	a mustache
a prefix	scissors	a whip
a net	a hose	a quarter

Which of these are **believable**?

A snail was the motorman on a trolley car.
The twins looked as much alike as two wagon wheels.

A rooster rowed a boat across the ocean.
Wool is clipped from a sheep.

In a few words that end in silent *e*, the *e* is not dropped when **able** is added.

Which of these would be most **noticeable**?

a battery in a flashlight

another car in traffic

a zebra at a party

When you speak of a **changeable** person, which of these do you mean?

a person with nickels and quarters

a person who changes his mind often

In a few words the ending **able** doesn't have the meaning of **can be**.

Anything **remarkable** will cause remarks. Which of these would be **remarkable**?

a parade of snails mustaches on hens

autumn in winter a battery in a car

An **agreeable** person is a pleasant person who wants to agree with other people.

Grandpa and Grandma had very different traits. Grandpa was quarrelsome. Grandma was always agreeable. Which of these words tell what Grandma was?

gentle kindly sulky mean

lazy calm weak fierce

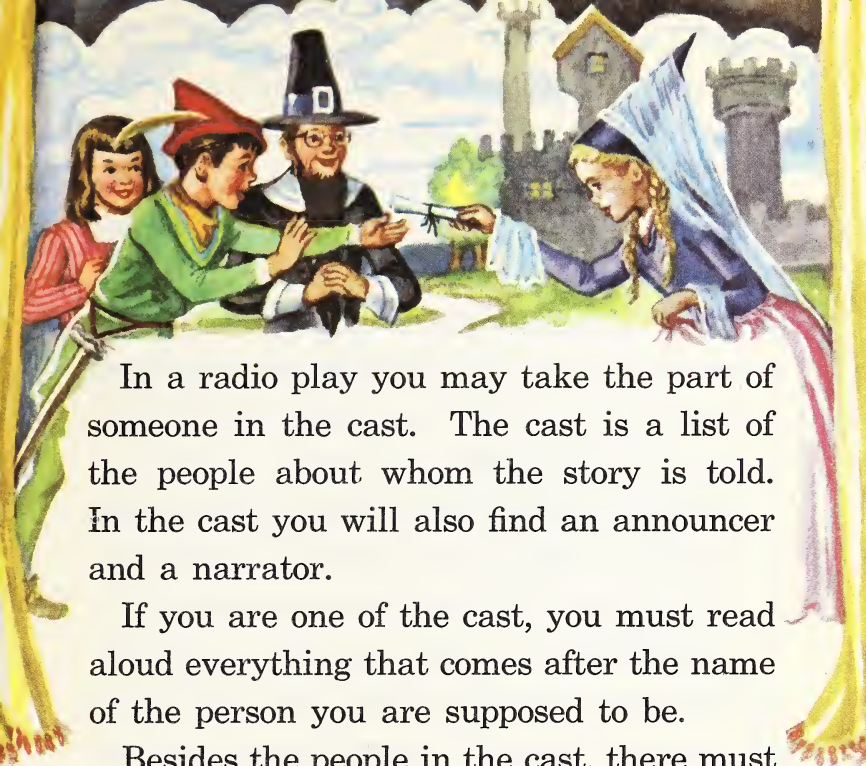


Putting on a Radio Play

Taking part in a radio play is different from taking part in a stage play. Actors in a stage play learn their parts by heart. Actors in a radio play read their parts. In a stage play the actors wear special clothes. In a radio play they do not.

Stage actors move around and act out their parts. Radio actors do not. The audience at a stage play sees and hears the actors. A radio audience does not see the actors.

The next story in this book is told as a radio play. You can read it just to enjoy the story, but it will be more fun if you help your class put it on as a radio play.



In a radio play you may take the part of someone in the cast. The cast is a list of the people about whom the story is told. In the cast you will also find an announcer and a narrator.

If you are one of the cast, you must read aloud everything that comes after the name of the person you are supposed to be.

Besides the people in the cast, there must be someone in charge of making the sounds which are needed in the play. If you are in charge of sounds, you should follow carefully the directions that come just after the word SOUND.

For the play in this book, just three sounds are necessary. They are: the tinkle of a bell, the sound of a door being opened, and the sound of horses' hoofs.

For the tinkle of a bell, ring a small bell. For the sound of a door being opened, use the door of your classroom.

For the sound of hoofs, get a wooden box not more than six inches deep. Cover the bottom with a layer of sand and small stones. Get also two smaller wooden boxes without tops. Each one should be small enough to hold with one hand.

Hold the smaller boxes upside down and bring them down, one after the other, on the sand and stones in the larger box.

The picture on this page shows a boy making the sound of hoofs. You will need to practise with the boxes until you are sure that the noise you make really sounds like horses trotting along.



In a stage play the curtain is usually closed between scenes. The audience sees the curtain close.

But a curtain would be of no use in a radio play. The radio audience would not see it. For that reason, music is used between scenes in a radio play. That music is called a bridge.

Because music is so necessary to a radio play, there must always be someone in charge of music. If you are in charge of music, have music ready for each place in the play where you see the word MUSIC.

In the play that follows, only simple music is necessary. It may be made by playing part of a record or by having children sing or hum part of a song that fits the story.

In the play you will find words printed like this between two marks: (*Surprised*). Those marks () are called parentheses. Words printed between parentheses are not to be read aloud. They give directions to be followed.

After the word SOUND, the words in parentheses tell what sound should be made.

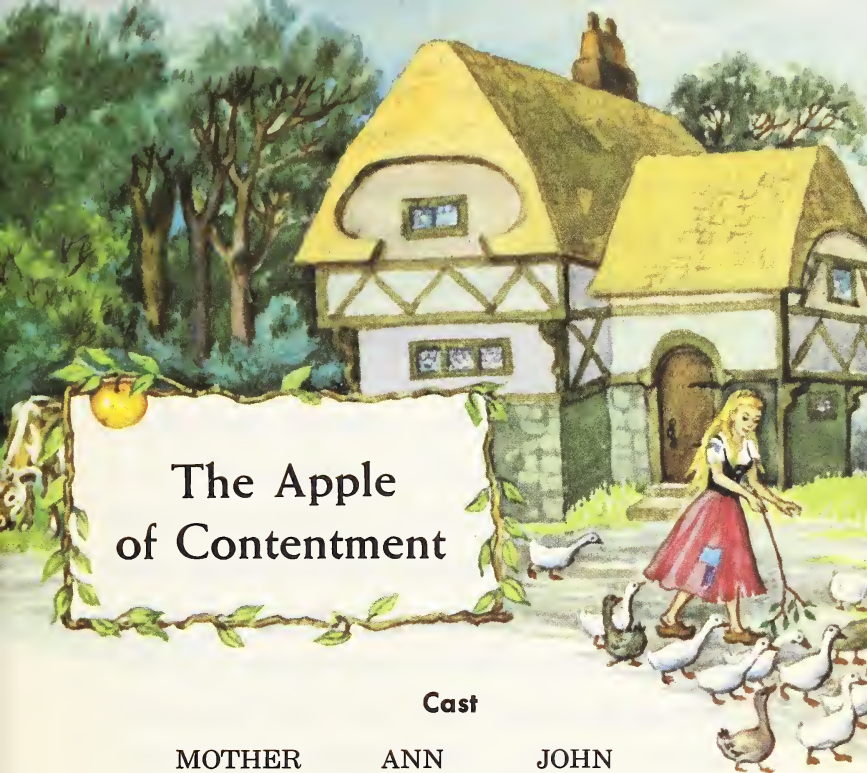
When the word *Up* is used in parentheses after the word MUSIC or SOUND, it means that the music or sound should begin. The word *Out* means that the music or sound should stop.

You will find words in parentheses among the words which you are to read aloud.

For example, (*Short pause*) means wait a moment before reading the next sentence. (*Surprised*) or (*Impatient*) tells you what feeling to express. (*Off mike*) means to make your voice seem to come from a long distance.

Now you are ready to put into practice the things you have learned about putting on a radio play.





The Apple of Contentment

Cast

MOTHER

ANN

JOHN

MARTHA

ELF

NARRATOR

JANE

KING

ANNOUNCER

MUSIC: (*Up and out*)

ANNOUNCER: Hello, boys and girls! Have you ever heard the story of the apple of contentment? The apple of contentment was a magic apple that a queer little man gave to a girl named Ann. Listen, and we'll tell you how it happened.

NARRATOR: There was once a woman who had three daughters. She was very ugly. She had thick, black eyebrows, and her nose was bent to the left.

Her older daughters, Martha and Jane, looked exactly like her. They, too, had thick, black eyebrows and noses which bent to the left. The woman loved these two older daughters very much.

The youngest daughter, Ann, was quite different. She was very beautiful. Her eyes were as blue as the skies, and her hair was the color of pure gold.

Because Ann was so different, her mother and her selfish sisters hated her. She had nothing but ragged clothes to wear and little to eat except dry bread.

If she asked for a little milk, her mother would say:

MOTHER: Certainly not! The milk is for Martha and Jane, my two pretty girls. It's a shame you don't look like them!

MARTHA: Ann has a queer, straight nose! It doesn't bend to the left like ours.

JANE: Her eyebrows aren't thick and black like ours. And her hair is yellow. Would anyone ever think she is pretty?

MOTHER: No, my dears. Ann is very ugly. She is fit for nothing but to drive our geese to pasture. It's time for you to go, Ann. Be sure you find a place where there is plenty of grass for the geese.

ANN: Yes, Mother. I'll go now.

MUSIC: (*Bridge*)

NARRATOR: Well, one morning Ann took her geese to a pasture beside a forest. As she was about to sit down on a stump, she spied a little red cap hanging on the twig of a bush. She picked up the cap and said to herself,

ANN: What a beautiful little red cap! And a tiny silver bell on a chain! I'll shake the cap and make the bell tinkle.

SOUND: (*Tinkle of bell*)



ANN: What a lovely sound this tiny bell makes! I'll keep the cap and make the bell tinkle whenever I feel sad.

ELF: Oh! Don't do that! It's my cap.

ANN: Whose voice is that? I can't see anybody. Where are you?

ELF: Here I am, on the ground.

ANN: Why! It's a tiny little man. Who are you?

ELF: I'm one of the elf people. We were dancing here last night on the grass. A puff of wind took my cap off. I can't make myself invisible without my cap. Please give it to me.

ANN: Very well, little elf. You may have it. It doesn't fit me. But may I keep the tiny silver bell and chain?

ELF: Oh, no! I can never become invisible unless the bell is on the cap.



ANN: Oh, I like that bell so much! But I'll give you your cap, and the bell, too. After all, they are yours.

ELF: Thank you! Thank you ever so much! I shall reward you for your kindness. Here are five pieces of silver money.

ANN: No, thank you. I don't want any reward for returning what belongs to you.

ELF: But I want to reward you in some way. Here, take this.

ANN: What is it? It's shaped like a peach stone, but it's as black as coal.

ELF: This is a seed from the apple of contentment. Plant it. A tree will grow almost at once. On that tree will be one apple. It will be a magic apple.

ANN: A magic apple?

ELF: Yes! Everybody who sees it will be sure to want it.

ANN: And if I pluck it, what will happen?

ELF: You will have food when you're hungry and warm clothes when you're cold. When you eat it, you will feel happy and contented.

ANN: But if I pluck the apple and eat it, it will be gone.

ELF: As soon as you pluck one apple from the tree, a golden bud will appear and grow into another apple. You may give an apple to somebody else, but if anyone else plucks an apple, he will find that it has changed.

ANN: Thank you very much, little elf man. I'm glad I decided to give you back your little silver bell. (*Surprised*) Why! The little elf man is gone! He must have made himself invisible.

Well, I still have this queer seed he gave me. I shall plant it as soon as I get my geese home today.

MUSIC: (*Bridge*)

NARRATOR: Late that afternoon, Ann planted the magic seed in the ground under her window. The next morning, when she looked out, she saw a beautiful little tree. It had grown just as the elf man said it would. On one branch she spied an apple shining like pure gold.



Quickly Ann dressed and ran out to the tree. As she put up her hand to pluck the apple, the tree dipped its branches downward toward her. She plucked the apple eagerly and bit into it.

ANN: Mmm! How delicious this apple tastes! It almost melts in my mouth. I wonder if another apple will grow as the elf man said it would? Yes! There's a golden bud growing into an apple.

MUSIC: (*Bridge*)

NARRATOR: Very soon, Ann's mother and sisters spied the tree.

MOTHER: Well! I wonder how this tree came here. I'm sure I never saw it before.

MARTHA: Neither did I, Mother.

JANE: I don't remember it, either.

MOTHER: Look, girls! There's an apple growing on one branch.

MARTHA: It shines like pure gold, Mother.

MOTHER: I must have it! Get it for me, Martha. That will be simple to do.

MARTHA: All right. I'll pluck it for you.
(*Short pause*) Oh! Every time I reach for the apple, the branch jumps out of my reach. I'm all out of breath.

MOTHER: Well, Jane, suppose you try. I won't be contented till I have it.

JANE: That apple looks delicious. I want a bite of it. I'm sure I'll be able to pluck it. (*Short pause*) Oh! That branch jumps out of my reach every time I get near the apple. I'll have to give up till I catch my breath, Mother.

MOTHER: I suppose I'll have to get it myself. I'm sure it's a simple job. (*Pause*) Oh! That branch keeps jumping away from me.



MARTHA: (*Angry*) The tree acts as if it doesn't want us to have that apple! It makes me so angry!

MOTHER: I'm afraid it's impossible to get the apple. This must be a magic tree.

MUSIC: (*Bridge*)

NARRATOR: Day after day the three selfish women tried to pluck the golden apple from the tree. They did not ask Ann to try. They were sure she would not be able to pluck it if they could not.

Early every morning, Ann drove the geese to pasture. Before she started, she plucked and ate an apple. Another one always grew in its place. All day long Ann was happy and contented.

Then, one morning, the King of that country was out for a ride. He had his favorite soldier along to protect him. As they were riding by Ann's house, they spied the golden apple shining on the tree. The King stopped his horse and turned to John, his favorite soldier.

SOUND: (*Horses' hoofs up and out*)

KING: Look, John! Look at that apple. It shines like pure gold, and it looks simply delicious. I must have it!

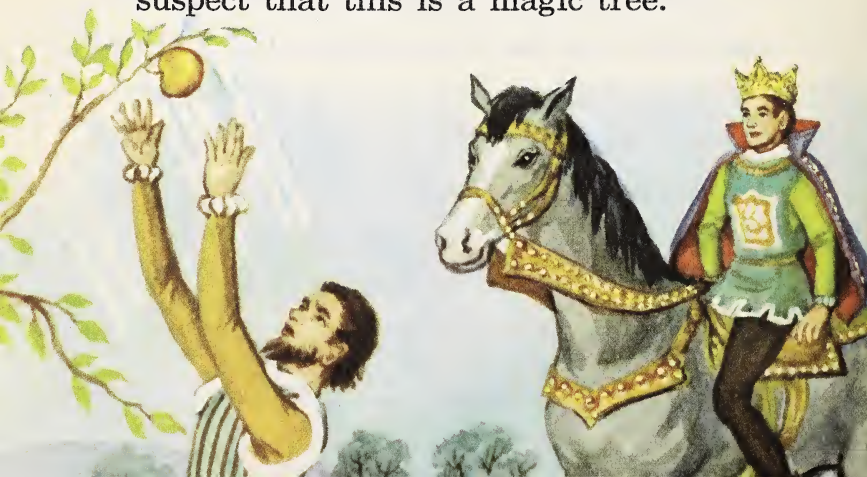
JOHN: At once, your Majesty. I'll pluck it for you. (*Short pause*) Why! This is very strange, your Majesty.

KING: What's strange, John?

JOHN: I can easily reach the branch where the apple hangs, your Majesty, but when I try to touch the apple, the branch jumps right out of my hand. It's impossible to get it.

KING: (*Impatient*) That sounds foolish, John! Try again.

JOHN: I am trying. I'm very sorry, your Majesty. I can't pluck that apple. I suspect that this is a magic tree.



KING: Help me off my horse. I'll get that apple myself. (*Pause*) Now! Why! This is really strange, John! The branch jumps away from me, too.

JOHN: It must be a magic tree, your Majesty.

KING: Perhaps you're right, John. But I desire this apple as I've never desired anything else in my life. I won't be contented until I have it. Call the people who live in this house.

JOHN: (*Calls*) Hello, there! You people in the house! Come out here!

SOUND: (*Door opens, off mike*)

MOTHER: (*Off mike*) What do you want?

JOHN: Come out here! The King wishes to talk to you.

MOTHER: (*Off mike*) The King! Oh! I must call my daughters. Girls! Come outside! The King wants to talk to us! (*Short pause*)

JOHN: Ma'am, the King wants to know whose tree this is.

MOTHER: It's our tree, your Majesty. That is, it belongs to my two daughters.

KING: I want the golden apple, ma'am. If one of your daughters can pluck it for me, I'll reward her well. I'll give her a bag of gold pieces.

MOTHER: A bag of gold pieces! I'm sure Martha, my oldest daughter, can easily get the apple for you, your Majesty.

KING: Let her try, then.

MOTHER: Martha, my dear, get the apple for his Majesty.

MARTHA: I'll try, your Majesty. The tree is mine. (*Surprised*) Why! The tree is bending down to me! I have the golden apple! I've plucked it off! Here it is, your Majesty.

KING: What's this! A ball of mud! How dare you play this trick on me!

JOHN: Look, your Majesty! The golden apple is still hanging on the tree!



MARTHA: (*Frightened*) But, sir! The King saw me pull it off the tree.

KING: Then another apple must have grown in its place. Now I am quite certain that this is a magic tree and a magic apple. The apple turned to mud in your hand, girl. This proves that you don't own the tree. I should have you thrown into jail for making an untrue claim.

MOTHER: Please don't do that, your Majesty! Martha was trying to help you. Please let my second daughter, Jane, get the apple for you.

KING: Well, let her try.

JANE: (*Off mike*) I'll get the apple, Mother.

(*Pause*) Here it is, your Majesty!

KING: Oh! Another handful of mud!

JOHN: But look, your Majesty! The apple is still on the tree!

KING: Wicked women! How dare you play tricks on me! I'll have you both thrown into jail.

MOTHER: Your Majesty, some wicked fairy is playing a trick on my poor daughters.

KING: She must have a good reason for changing the apple into a handful of mud. Do you still claim that the tree belongs to your daughters?

MOTHER: Oh, yes, it does, your Majesty.

SOUND: (*Tinkle of bell*)

ELF: Don't believe her, your Majesty.

KING: Whose voice do I hear? I don't see anybody.

ELF: You can't see me. I am an invisible elf man. I gave the seed of this magic tree to the real owner to plant. The woman has a third daughter.

MOTHER: Well, yes, I do have another daughter. But she is not fit for you to see, your Majesty. All she is fit for is to take our geese out to pasture.

KING: I want to see her. Call her at once.

MOTHER: Yes, your Majesty. Jane, go and tell Ann to come here. (*Short pause*) There she comes. You can see, your Majesty, that such an ugly girl simply couldn't own a tree with a golden apple growing on it.

KING: Why, she is beautiful! Her hair shines like pure gold in the sunlight, and her eyes are as blue as the skies.

JOHN: She is very beautiful, your Majesty.

KING: Good morning, young lady. Will you tell us, please, whose tree this is?

ANN: This tree is mine, your Majesty. It grew from a magic seed that I planted. A good elf gave me the seed for returning his cap with a silver bell on it.

JOHN: That must have been the bell we just heard!

KING: I'm very anxious to have that golden apple. Will you pluck it for me, please?

ANN: Gladly, your Majesty. (*Pause*) Here it is. You see it is a magic apple. When I pluck it off the tree, another apple immediately grows in its place.





KING: This is wonderful! How sweet the apple smells! Like honey.

ANN: I have never tasted honey, but I'm sure it can't taste more delicious than that apple. Eat it, your Majesty. It will give you a feeling of contentment.

KING: Mmm! You're right, Ann. Never have I felt so contented. Only one thing is necessary to complete my contentment.

ANN: What is that, your Majesty?

KING: You yourself, Ann! I fell in love with you the moment I saw you. Will you marry me and be my queen?

ANN: Marry you? I, your Majesty?

KING: Yes, Ann. If you will marry me and be my queen, you shall have fine clothes and ride in a golden coach. As my queen, you shall have anything your heart may desire. Will you marry me?

ANN: Yes, your Majesty, I will marry you and be your queen. I'm sure I'll be very happy with you.

KING: Wonderful! John, ride back to the palace and send my golden coach here.

JOHN: At once, your Majesty!

SOUND: (*Horses' hoofs up and out*)

KING: Ann, my dear, how shall I punish your mother and sisters for keeping you cold and hungry and in ragged clothes?

MOTHER: (*Frightened*) Oh, please don't punish us, your Majesty!

ANN: No, please don't, your Majesty. I could not be happy if I knew that they were being punished on my account.

KING: Well, I'll do as you wish, my dear.

MOTHER: Oh, thank you, your Majesty!

MARTHA: We are very happy that Ann, our sweet sister, is to be Queen.

JANE: Whenever we look at this tree, we shall think of our sweet sister Ann.

KING: I hope you mean that as kindly as it sounds.

SOUND: (*Tinkle of bell*)

ELF: These selfish women shall never see this magic tree again.

ANN: Why, I recognize that voice! It's the voice of the invisible elf man!

ELF: Yes, Ann, I am the elf whose cap you returned. This tree shall go with you. See! I have made it disappear already. From now on, it shall grow in the palace garden so that you and the King may pluck and eat the golden apples of contentment all the rest of your lives.

MUSIC: (*Up and out*)

ANNOUNCER: And so, boys and girls, ends the story, THE APPLE OF CONTENTMENT. I'm sure you will be glad to hear that Ann and the King had a grand wedding and lived happily ever after.



The Elephant and the Bee

An elephant said to a bumblebee,
“How should you like to be big like me?”
“Buzz,” said the bee. “I am not very small.”
“G-rump,” said the elephant. “You’re hardly
at all!”

“Buzz,” said the bee. “Don’t you wish you
could fly?”
“G-rump,” said the elephant. “Why should
I?

How should you like my trunk for your
honey?”

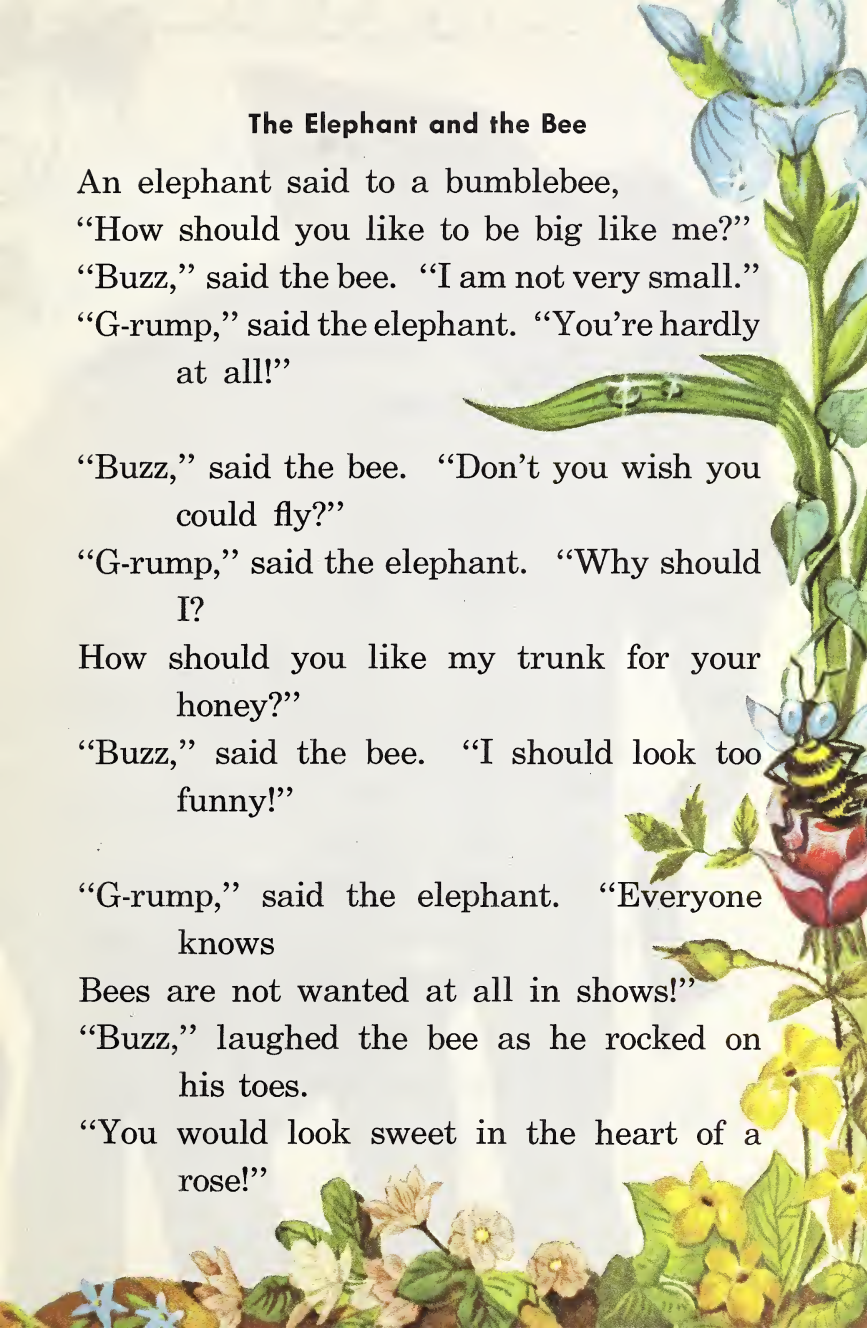
“Buzz,” said the bee. “I should look too
funny!”

“G-rump,” said the elephant. “Everyone
knows

Bees are not wanted at all in shows!”

“Buzz,” laughed the bee as he rocked on
his toes.

“You would look sweet in the heart of a
rose!”





Buckskin

Do you ever wish that you could have been a boy in a family of early settlers in Canada? If you had been, you might have owned and worn an outfit like the one pictured above.

The two main parts of such an outfit were the jacket and the trousers. Both were made of a kind of soft leather called buckskin. Sometimes the upper half of the suit was a shirt rather than a jacket.

On the arms of the jacket and on the legs of the trousers you can see something that looks like short strings. That is the fringe that was put on to make the outfit look dressy. The fringe was made of buckskin too. The more fringe a suit had, the better a boy liked it.

The buttons for a buckskin jacket were often made of wood. Sometimes they were made of bone, and now and then of shells. Whatever they were made of, they had to be sewed on tight.

A boy could have a fine time wearing a buckskin suit as long as he kept it dry. When it got wet and then dried out, he often found that it had shrunk badly.

Sometimes a boy found that it was almost impossible to get into his buckskin suit after it had shrunk. His body was too big for the jacket. His arms were too long and too big for the sleeves. His legs were too big for the trousers.

If he forced himself into the jacket, he might not be able to button it. If he buttoned it and then tried to move his arms, the buttons might fly off. Or the sleeves might come apart where they had been sewed together.

In the next story, you will read about what happened to a boy and his buckskin suit.



Honey Spring

Everybody in Jonathan Brown's house was busy and excited. His sisters and mother were rushing around from morning till night. His mother was sewing and cooking. His sisters were cleaning the big, gray, stone house to get it ready for a wedding.

Jonathan's oldest sister, Daisy May, was to marry a man who owned a large steamboat on the river. There was to be a big wedding. All the neighbors would be invited. After the wedding, Daisy May would go to live on the steamboat.

Everybody except Jonathan seemed to have important things to do. He was beginning to feel that he was just in the way.

Then early one morning, Daisy May said, "I have something very important for you to do today, Jonathan. I want you to help invite the neighbors to my wedding."

Jonathan was pleased. Usually his big brothers did all the inviting to parties and picnics. It meant riding miles and miles to call at every house in the neighborhood.

The neighborhood in which the Brown family lived covered the whole countryside. People who were neighbors often lived far apart in those days.

“Which one of our horses shall I ride?” asked Jonathan.

Jonathan’s mother shook her head. “I think you are still too little to ride a horse,” she said. “But you have fast, strong legs. You can walk as far as Honey Spring and invite everybody along the way.”

Honey Spring was not a town. It was a real spring near the foot of a big tree that had once been the home of wild bees. That is why it was called Honey Spring.

Honey Spring was more than three miles from Jonathan’s home. He wished that his mother would let him ride, but it was better to walk than not to go at all. He wasn’t one bit lazy.

"May I wear my buckskin suit?" he asked. Nothing made him feel prouder than wearing the fringed trousers and the fringed jacket with its row of homemade bone buttons down the front.

"Certainly," said his mother. "You must look your best. You have a very important job to do."

"Don't forget to wash the egg off your face," his sister Abbie warned him.

"And be sure to brush the hay and chicken feathers out of your hair," America Jane, another sister, added with a smile.

Jonathan washed his face and hands with great care. He brushed his hair and slicked it down with plenty of water. Then he put on his buckskin suit.



“I am growing up fast,” he thought as he buttoned the jacket. “This suit is not as long on me as it was when Mother made it for me last year.”

But he was not growing as fast as he wanted to. He was still called Little Jonathan too often by all the Brown family.

He stopped thinking about his size when Daisy May brought out a sheet of her best white writing paper. On it she had done her prettiest writing. It said:

There will be a wedding at the home of Nathan Brown next Saturday. You are invited to come in the morning and stay all day.

Daisy May read every word of it aloud to Jonathan. Then she rolled up the paper, tied a red ribbon around it, and handed the roll to him.

“Stop at every house long enough for people to read this,” she told him. “If they cannot read, you must tell them what it says. Be careful not to lose this paper.”

Everyone in the neighborhood was pleased to see Jonathan and to be invited to the wedding. At each house he stopped a while to rest and visit. By noon he was hungry and was happy to be invited by a good neighbor to stay for dinner.

By the time Jonathan reached Honey Spring it was the middle of the afternoon, and he was hot and tired. The spring looked inviting.

In the years gone by, the running water had washed out a deep and wide hole where the spring came out of the ground. Now that hole was full of clear, cold, fresh water.

Jonathan got down on his knees beside the spring. Carefully he leaned out over it, dipped up a double-handful of water, and drank it. He dipped up and drank many double-handfuls of the cold water.

Each time he leaned out, he saw himself as clearly as if he were looking into a mirror.

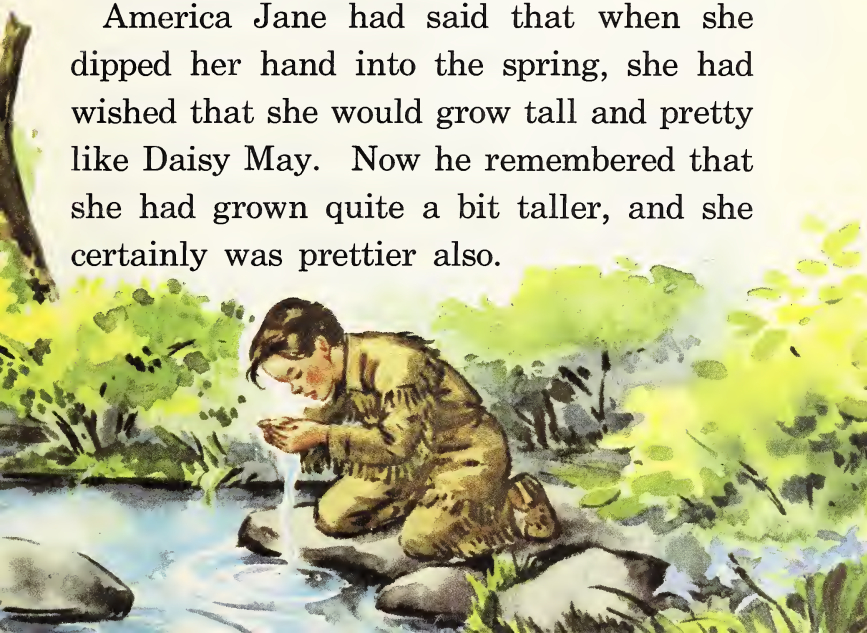
“How little I am!” he exclaimed. “I wish I were bigger.”

Suddenly he remembered something that his sister, America Jane, had told him.

“They say that the water in Honey Spring is magic,” she had said. “If you dip your hand three times into the middle of the spring and make the same wish each time, your wish will come true.”

“I wonder if that is true,” thought Jonathan.

America Jane had said that when she dipped her hand into the spring, she had wished that she would grow tall and pretty like Daisy May. Now he remembered that she had grown quite a bit taller, and she certainly was prettier also.



"It won't hurt to try," Jonathan told himself.

He lay down and stretched his hand out to reach the middle of the spring. Honey Spring was rather wide, and Jonathan's arm was rather short. He had to stretch with all his might.

"I wish to grow taller," he said, as he dipped his hand into the water.

"I wish to grow taller," he said, as he dipped his hand in again.

"I wish to ——" Just as he started his third wish, a squirrel overhead dropped an acorn. It hit Jonathan's heel and made him jump. Into Honey Spring he went, head first.

"O-o-o-o!" he cried as he came up blowing water out of his nose and mouth. This was too much of Honey Spring.



He caught hold of a low branch of a bush nearby and pulled himself out of the spring. Water was dripping from his clothes, his hair, and even his eyebrows. The white paper was wet and wrinkled, and the pretty writing was spoiled. "It's a good thing I have everybody invited," he thought.

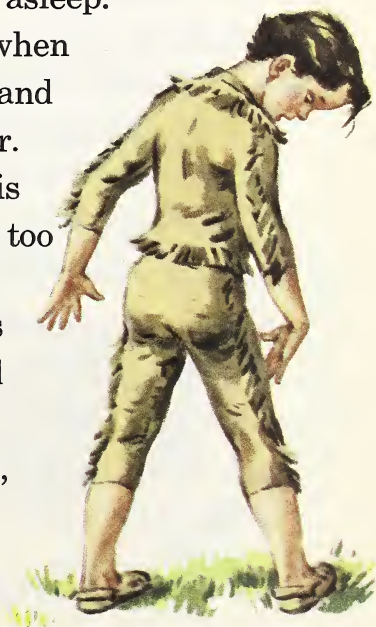
He stood up for a while and let the water drip from his buckskin jacket and trousers.

On the bank above the spring, the sunshine was warm and bright. Jonathan decided to stretch out on a grassy spot while his clothes dried. Soon he was fast asleep.

It was almost sundown when he awakened. He sat up and stretched. He felt queer. He could hardly bend his arms. His sleeves were too tight.

He stood up. His legs felt strange. He looked down at them.

"My goodness!" he said, wrinkling his brow.



His legs were much too long for his trousers. The trousers that had been long enough hardly reached his knees now. He looked at his arms. His arms hung far out of his jacket sleeves. His buckskin suit had shrunk, but he did not know it.

"My goodness!" he said again. "What has happened? How long have I slept?"

Then Jonathan remembered what America Jane had said about Honey Spring. It was a magic spring which made wishes come true.

"My wish is coming true!" he exclaimed.

He started home, but his trousers had shrunk so much and were so tight that he could hardly bend his knees.

"I wonder how long I'll keep on growing," he thought. "I wonder if I am big enough to carry a cow in my arms."

He tried to draw a long breath, and two buttons popped from his jacket. He raised his arms, and the sides of his sleeves pulled apart. He thought how long his mother had worked sewing up those sleeves. Now she'd have to sew them up again.

“Soon I will be completely out of my clothes,” thought Jonathan. He chuckled to himself. “I suppose by this time I am even taller than my brother Jeremiah.”

He took one long step, and the trouser legs popped open where they had been sewed together down the sides.

“How surprised Mother and the girls will be when I come through the door!” he thought. “If I keep growing taller, I’ll have to bend down to get through the door.”

That thought bothered him. Maybe he had already grown too tall. He began to feel lonely.

“I wonder where I’ll sleep,” he whispered to himself as he thought of his little bed in which he slept so contentedly.



How strange it would be to look down on people instead of looking up at them!

"I suppose I'll be big enough to carry a cow around in my arms, the way Abbie carries a kitten," he said to himself. "That won't be any fun. A kitten is nicer to carry around than a cow. Kittens are soft, but a cow is not."

He was really worried now. "I wish I had never made that wish," he said to himself.

He tried to hurry along, hoping to get home before he grew any bigger. But walking was not easy. His buckskin jacket pinched so tight that he could hardly get his breath.

As he trudged along, he had a new thought that worried him. What if everybody should be afraid of him? What if his sisters should run off screaming? What if his mother should go into her room and lock the door?

It was almost dark now, and Jonathan felt homesick. At last he spied the light in the kitchen window at home.



“I wonder where I will eat tonight,” he thought. “There won’t be a chair big enough for me to sit in.”

Jonathan went up the walk and around to the kitchen. He bent almost double as he went through the kitchen door. Everybody looked at him in great surprise.

“It is I, Jonathan,” he announced loudly. “Don’t be afraid. I will not hurt you.”

His brothers and his sisters just laughed. Jonathan rubbed his eyes and looked at them. They were not little, as he had expected them to be. They were still much bigger and taller than he was.

“What has happened to you?” asked Abbie. She spoke just as she always spoke.

Jonathan told about being at the Honey Spring and how he had fallen into it and grown taller.

For some strange reason, his mother took him in her arms and rocked him. "My poor little Jonathan," she said. "You have not grown bigger. Your buckskin jacket and trousers have shrunk. Buckskin clothes always get smaller when they are wet."

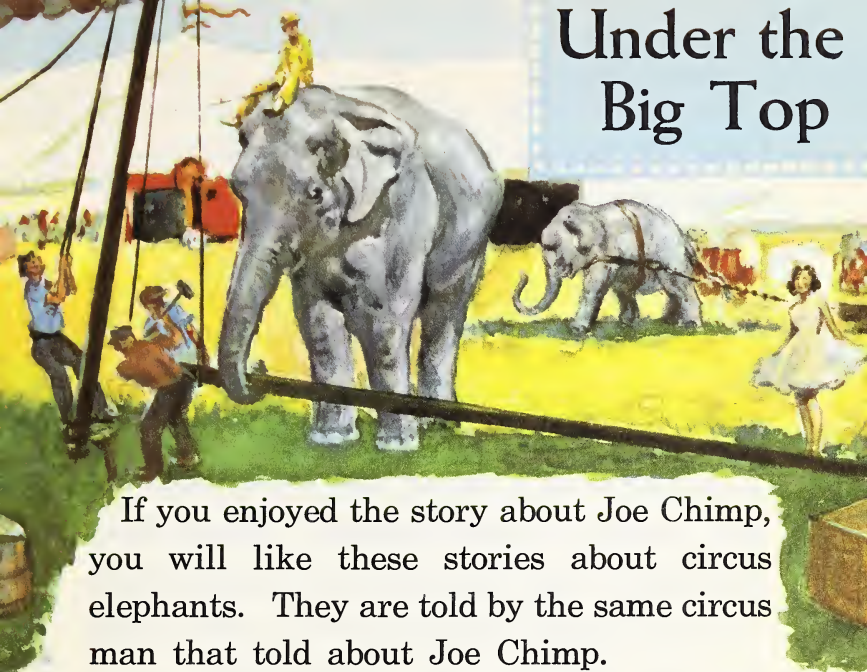
"You mean I am still Little Jonathan?" he asked, looking about at the warm, safe kitchen and at his big brothers and sisters.

"Yes, you are still Little Jonathan," said his mother.

"Well, I'm glad," said Jonathan. "I want to be Little Jonathan Brown for a long time."



Under the Big Top



If you enjoyed the story about Joe Chimp, you will like these stories about circus elephants. They are told by the same circus man that told about Joe Chimp.

* * * * *

Of all circus animals, elephants are the most interesting, the most useful, and the smartest. No other animals can do as many things for the circus as the elephants. They are good workers and clever actors.

When an elephant understands what he is to do, he does it very well. And no one has to stand over him to see that he does what he is supposed to do. He may be slow, but he is not lazy.

Big Sally was one of the smartest elephants I ever knew. One day she had a chance to prove how smart she was.

We had a very bad fire while we were in winter quarters. It spread rapidly from building to building. Finally the elephant barn began to burn. There were forty elephants in it.

Animals, and especially elephants, are very quick to sense danger. Those forty elephants were out of their barn before we even realized that it was on fire. And they got out in a very orderly way.

Oh, they didn't go through the door. They walked right through the walls. They all got out at once and together. Not one elephant tried to run away.

When those forty elephants were out of danger, they began to miss their keepers. The keepers slept in a small house right behind the elephant barn.

After pausing only a minute or two, Big Sally went directly to the keepers' house and pounded on the door with her trunk.



The keepers were sleeping so soundly they did not wake up, so she forced her way into the house and awakened them. Then she picked up her keeper and carried him to safety. The other men quickly left the house too.

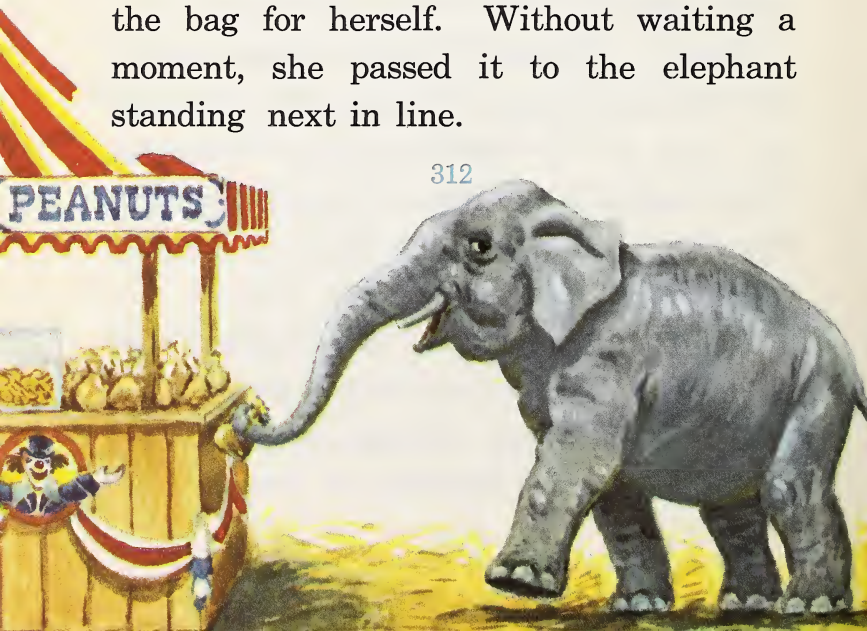
Without a doubt, Big Sally's idea was to save her own keeper. In doing so she saved the lives of the other keepers. However, if her keeper hadn't always treated her well, Big Sally wouldn't have been so anxious to save him.

I believe that Big Sally was the smartest elephant we ever had. She proved one afternoon that she thought not only for herself but also for others.

On that afternoon, we had all forty elephants ready to go into the main tent for their performance. They stood patiently waiting just outside the Big Top. Big Sally, being the lead elephant, was first in line.

Near the line of elephants was a peanut stand. Someone called the owner away. The moment the man turned his back, Big Sally edged over close to the stand. She picked up one bag of peanuts with her trunk. She was careful not to upset the pile of bags.

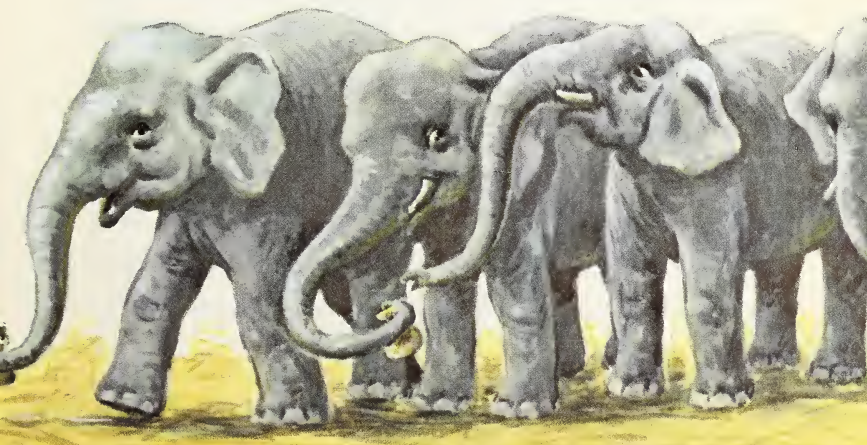
Even though she liked peanuts as well as most people like pie, Big Sally did not keep the bag for herself. Without waiting a moment, she passed it to the elephant standing next in line.

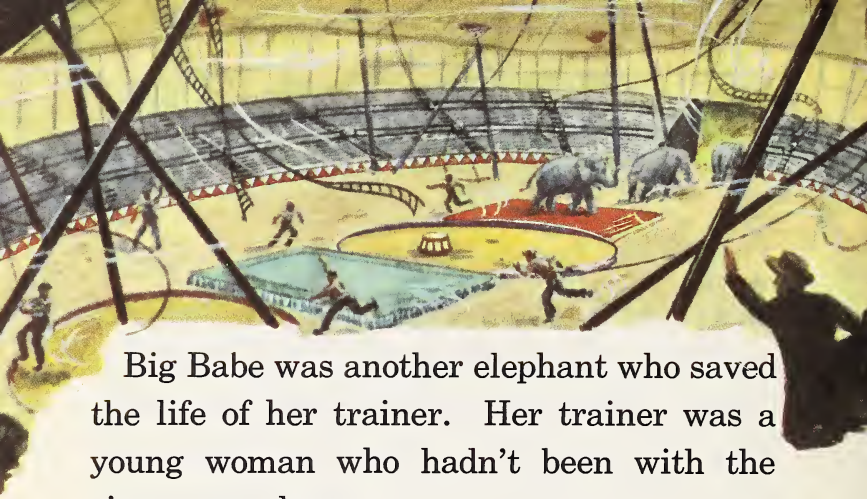


That elephant passed the bag to the one behind him. And on it went, down the long line of elephants, until it reached the last one.

Big Sally kept on taking bags of peanuts and passing them along until every one of the forty elephants had one. She had just taken a bag for herself when the man came back. He couldn't understand where his peanuts had gone, and I don't think he knows even now, because I didn't tell him.

I've thought about that trick a lot since and wondered how often Big Sally had done it. She and the other elephants worked together too well for it to have been the first time. I think those elephants had had a lot of practice!





Big Babe was another elephant who saved the life of her trainer. Her trainer was a young woman who hadn't been with the circus very long.

This young trainer seemed to understand and like the elephants. The elephants liked her, too. I think that was because she treated them so kindly and praised them when they did well.

One afternoon after the performance we had a blow-down. A strong wind came up suddenly, got under the Big Top, and lifted it up like a great umbrella.

Some of the stakes holding the tent ropes pulled out of the ground. Because the tent was no longer held down by the stakes, the wind lifted it higher. The ropes and poles in the tent began to swing back and forth.

Big Babe's trainer had been practising an act with five of the elephants. At the time of the blow-down, they were on their way back to the animal tent, led by Big Babe.

As the girl was hurrying to get out of the tent, she tripped over a low rail around the edge of the ring. She fell directly in the path of the huge center pole, which was swinging toward her.

As she tripped, she screamed. Big Babe heard that scream. She turned quickly and rushed back to get between the pole and the girl.

Big Babe got there in time. She took the full force of the blow from the pole on her own great back. Then she gently lifted the girl with her trunk and ran with her out of the tent to safety.



VOCABULARY

CLIMBING HIGHER, the second book for the third year, is planned to follow the first book for the third year, LOOKING AHEAD. It repeats each word in the vocabulary of LOOKING AHEAD, except some proper names. The names of characters in CLIMBING HIGHER are not counted as new words unless the names can also be used as meaningful words. The following list contains the 426 new words introduced in CLIMBING HIGHER. Variants formed by adding *s, es, d, ed, ing, n, en, er, est, y, ly, or ful*, or the prefix *un*, to words previously taught, compounds formed by joining two word forms previously taught, and simple contractions are not counted as new words. Variants formed by adding the prefix *re, dis, or mis* or the suffix *less, ness, or able* are counted as new words until special lessons teaching the formation of such words are reached in the text. Each word below is listed as it first appears in CLIMBING HIGHER. The list does not include words which are used for practice in the special lessons for developing power in phonetics and word analysis.

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 5. jam | 15. eight | 28. ——— | quarrelling |
| shot | lunch | 29. ——— | 39. complained |
| 6. aim | 16. met | 30. nix | 40. ——— |
| grin | sheet | rosy | 41. declared |
| raspberries | supplies | 31. husband | selfish |
| stump | wrap | knitting | 42. ——— |
| 7. practice | 17. timber | 32. rows | 43. tune |
| scared | 18. grew | spill | 44. ——— |
| squealed | hornets' | 33. ouch | 45. page |
| 8. bite | low | struggled | puzzle |
| cottage | 19. rapidly | ugly | riddles |
| dare | 20. gasped | wrinkled | 46. difference |
| 9. army | snapping | 34. begged | 47. accuse |
| berries | 21. breath | creature | stolen |
| bushes | drew | grant | stupid |
| Friday | pawing | screamed | thief |
| 10. blame | shaking | 35. impatiently | 48. circle |
| 11. till | 22. settled | rage | draw |
| 12. forest | 23. growl | fiercely | exactly |
| loggers' | mad | scowled | inch |
| tower | 24. humming | sulked | 49. forward |
| 13. distance | 25. ——— | 37. compared | gaze |
| led | 26. check | pleasant | paused |
| spot | figure | waste | remained |
| 14. lion | rules | 38. colt | 50. common |
| loaded | 27. ——— | cool | 51. confess |

doubted	75. ———	slipped	131. ———
stuck	76. ———	105. entered	132. ———
52. failed	77. ———	106. ma'am	133. commas
fellow	78. ———	rather	Lord
foolish	79. ———	107. begun	134. ———
stealing	80. ———	key	135. ———
53. ———	81. ———	peeking	136. ———
54. Canada	82. ———	108. village	137. wicked
attacked	83. ———	109. lettuce	Slick
cabins	84. ———	wink	Nick
stockades	85. ———	110. delicious	swing
55. guns	86. ———	gobble	138. ———
signal	87. ———	111. favorite	139. Bee
56. wipe	88. ———	sold	Bumble
57. tales	89. ———	swept	fifty
war	90. ———	112. lizards	140. ———
58. awake	91. ———	skins	141. dreary
sang	92. ———	twenty	142. huge
song	93. ———	113. banged	preparing
59. fort	94. ———	114. dashing	Saint
messenger	95. canaries	115. ———	143. amuse-
60. forty	fed	116. crazy	ments
soldiers	notion	knees	wafers
trap	96. business	117. annoys	144. Herr
61. kill	customers	child	inquired
protect	hated	mischief	pleasure
62. bravely	seed	property	145. attracted
harm	97. Hyacinth	118. robbed	praise
pitcher	latched	119. ———	success
63. eleven	skunk	120. confused	146. glittering
pretend	98. parrot	facts	jumbo
sixteen	remark-	suggested	mirrors
64. calm	able	weep	stars
courage	tinkled	121. case	147. ———
trembled	99. bars	sobs	148. compete
65. ———	scampered	122. allow	149. ———
66. ———	wiggled	single	150. cone
67. escaped	100. Duchess	solve	dripping
lesson	Duke	123. causing	melted
68. forms	perched	mystery	151. ———
group	sing	124. experi-	152. ———
root	101. biscuit	ment	153. list
statement	poked	125. sniffed	items
69. doubled	scattered	126. ———	154. ———
repeated	102. bowl	127. neither	155. ———
70. ———	carrots	nor	156. ———
71. ———	103. amount	reward	157. proved
72. prefix	sweep	128. ———	Daisy
73. ———	104. amazed	129. ———	Cinder
74. ———	hunted	130. invite	158. ———

159. impossible	188. ———	216. fat	sturdy
kicked	189. ———	offer	243. died
pole	190. ———	shocked	nibble
tall	191. ———	worth	244. crept
160. ———	192. ———	217. ———	insects
161. lop	193. ———	218. chuckled	orioles
paid	194. ———	concerned	parents
162. boomer	195. ———	219. ———	245. ———
coal	196. ———	220. lazy	246. lumber
freight	197. ———	neighbor-	sawmill
shovelled	198. ———	hood	sky
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